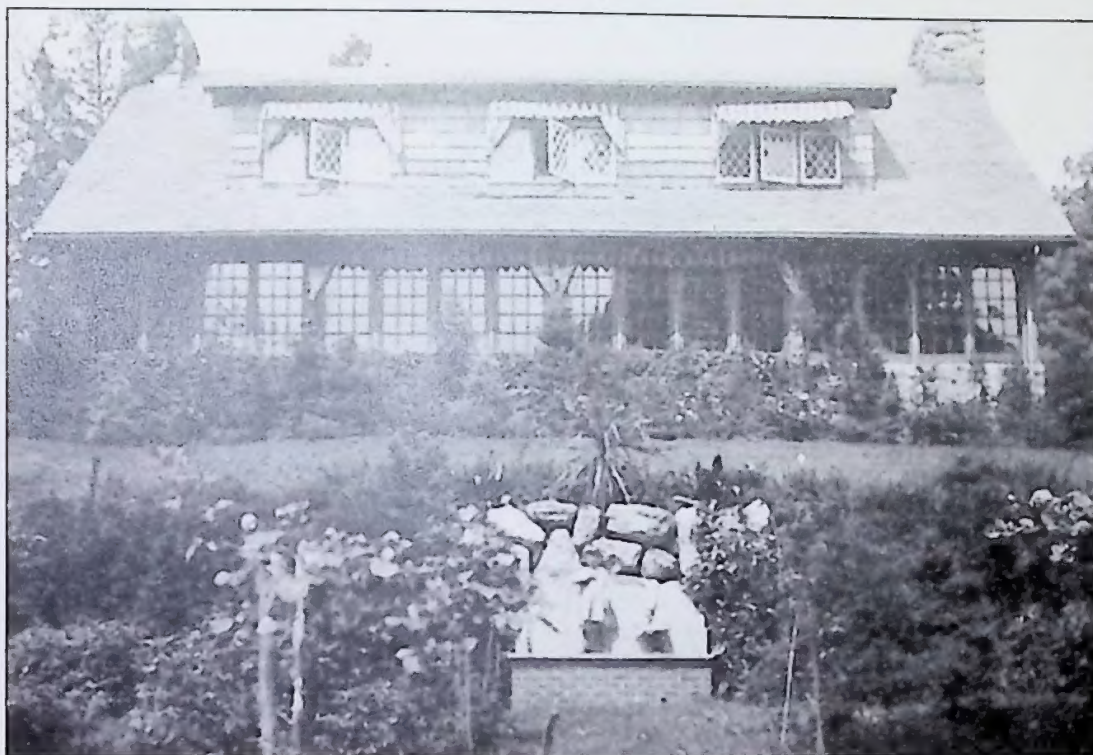


# MR. STICKLEY'S HOME: 1911



AN EXHIBITION PRODUCED BY  
THE STICKLEY MUSEUM AT CRAFTSMAN FARMS

FEBRUARY 2011

AT THE

24TH ANNUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS CONFERENCE  
GROVE PARK INN  
ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

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.S74 A4  
2011

THIS EXHIBITION IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF HENRY FULDNER.

"NOW WHEN IN MIDDLE LIFE I TURN BACK TO  
FARMING BECAUSE OF THE INTEREST AND PLEASURE  
I FIND IN IT."

— Gustav Stickley, *The Craftsman*, November 1908



Gustav Stickley as he appeared in 1910.



**Cover Photo:** Gustav Stickley's grandchildren Barbara and Edith Wiles play on the stone bench located in the rose garden on the eastern elevation of Log House at Craftsman Farms. — *Courtesy of Robert and Linda Preim*

**Back Cover Photo:** Gustav Stickley with his first granddaughter, Barbara Wiles, on the lawn of Craftsman Farms, circa 1913. — *Courtesy of Barbara & Henry Fuldner*



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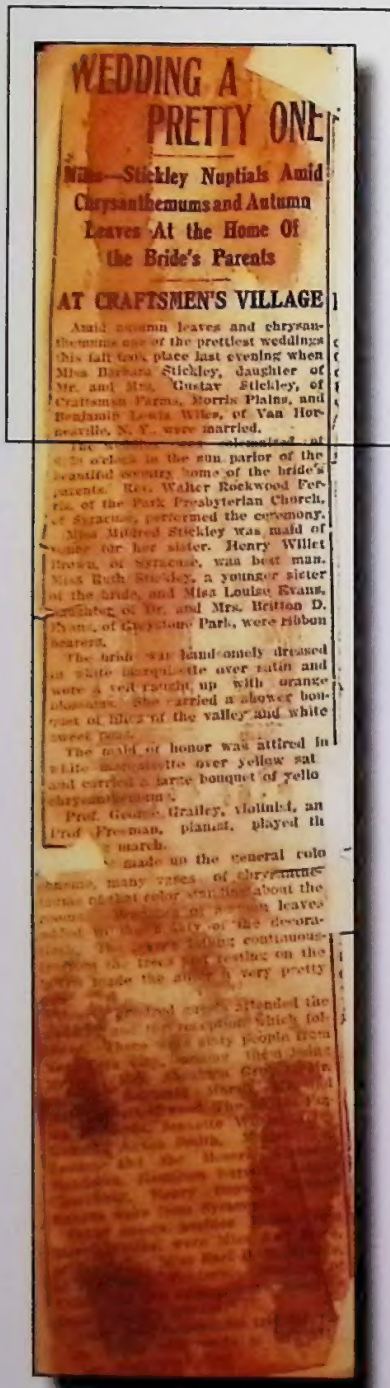




# MEMORIES FROM MARION STICKLEY'S SCRAPBOOK

## A "PRETTY" WEDDING AT CRAFTSMAN FARMS

The big event at Craftsman Farms on October 19, 1911 was the wedding of Barbara Stickley to Benjamin Wiles. Note that the newspaper clipping refers to Craftsman Farms as Craftsman Village, the original name that Gustav Stickley had intended for the property. If you look closely, you will see that the paper misspelled Wiles.



*Mr. and Mrs. Gustav Stickley  
announce the marriage of their daughter  
Barbara  
to  
Mr. Benjamin Lewis Wiles  
on Thursday, the nineteenth of October  
nineteen hundred and eleven  
Craftsman Farms, Morris Plains, New Jersey*

— Courtesy of Robert S. Preim



Mark E. Weaver

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**T**he Craftsman Farms Foundation in conjunction with the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms, wish to express their sincere gratitude to the many people who joined together to create the exhibition and catalogue entitled: *Mr. Stickley's Home: 1911*. This exhibition is not only the museum's fourth-consecutive exhibition created exclusively for the Grove Park Inn Arts & Crafts Conference, but also a celebration of the centennial year of the Log House at Craftsman Farms. Thank you to those who helped make this year's project a reality:

☛ The members of this year's project team: Barbara Fuldner, Peter Mars, Heather Stivison, and Mark E. Weaver.

☛ Bruce Johnson and the GPI Arts & Crafts Conference for their unwavering support of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms in so many ways.

☛ Special thanks to our essay writers who brought their individual passion for their subjects to further enlighten the public about Gustav Stickley's home, Craftsman Farms. A. Pat Bartinique, David Cathers, Mark Alan Hewitt, Peter K. Mars, and Mark E. Weaver.

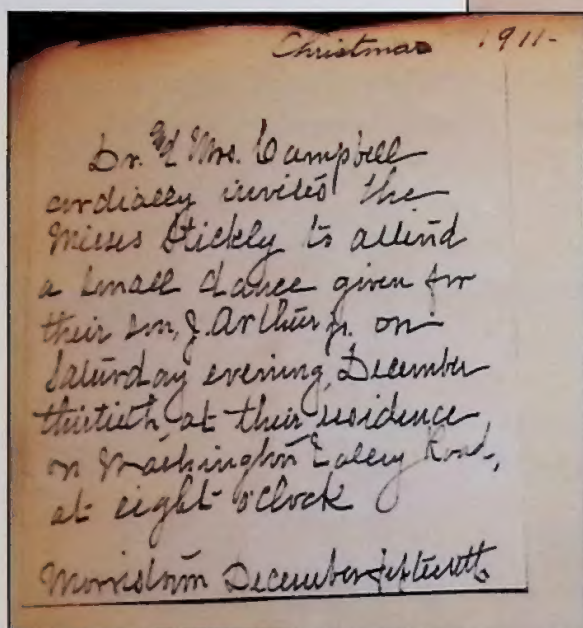
☛ The staff of the Stickley Museum: Executive Director Heather Stivison, Jennifer De-  
maio, Vonda Givens, Shunzyu Haigler, Susie Traverso, and Betty Wyka.

☛ Our generous lenders: In addition to objects from the permanent collection of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms, the exhibition includes loans from the collections of descendants of Gustav Stickley: Nancy Glesmann Calderwood, Ruth Glesmann, and Robert S. Preim. We thank them for sharing these items with us for the GPI audience to study and enjoy.

☛ These additional individuals who helped the exhibition and publication come together in various unique ways: Mike Dawson, Tim Gleason, Richard Gottardi, Bruce Johnson, Ray Stubblebine, B.W. Bosenberg & Company, Landscape Architects, and Pat Perlett.

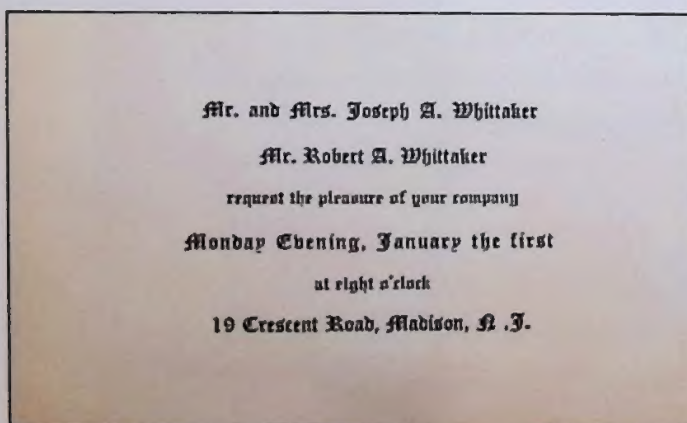


# THE EVER POPULAR... *Marion Stickley*



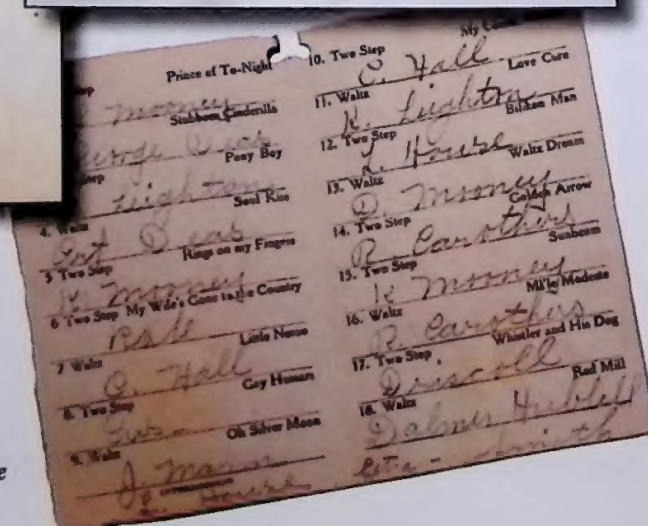
Hand painted place card from a function held at the home of Homer Davenport by his daughter Mildred.

Samples of a few of the many invitations to Marion Stickley as found in her scrapbook. The Stickley girls had a reputation for being very popular.



Images from Marion Stickley's scrapbook  
— Courtesy of Robert S. Preim

Dance cards found in Marion Stickley's scrapbook were always full.





Heather E. Stivison, Executive Director

## INTRODUCTION

**M**r. Stickley's Home: 1911 is the fourth in the "Mr. Stickley" series of exhibitions produced by the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms for the annual Grove Park Inn Arts and Crafts Conference. The exhibition coincides with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of Gustav Stickley's iconic Log House at Craftsman Farms and allows us the opportunity to examine Craftsman Farms with fresh eyes and new scholarship.

Stickley's creation of Craftsman Farms was a richly multifaceted story of idealism and aspirations mingled with the realities of business, family life, and finances. The complex story of Craftsman Farms is a uniquely American tale, of romantic visions of a simple-life, where the joys of our native land and natural environment were celebrated and where farm-work and hand-crafts were elevated. And yet, the man who established this rustic utopia made his living in New York City and was quite a business tycoon who expertly marketed his products to the American psyche. In roughly a decade, Craftsman Farms evolved from the dream described in great detail in the October 1908 issue of *The Craftsman* magazine, to a planned artisans village, to the dream of a school for boys, to a working farm supplying produce to The Craftsman Restaurant, to a family home, to a property sold in bankruptcy.

Where does one begin to understand a story filled with such complexities? One can only fully understand the development and progression of Craftsman Farms by delving into its many facets — the land, the buildings, the family that made it their home, the historical context, and the philosophies that led to its creation. The essays in this exhibition catalogue shine a light on some of these facets to enhance the body of knowledge and deepen our understanding of Craftsman Farms.


In his essay, *1911 — A Year at Craftsman Farms*, David Cathers uses Mildred Stickley's newly discovered 1911 diary to give us an intimate view of the family that called Craftsman Farms their home. This uniquely personal diary leads Cathers to offer us the imagery and feel of that particular time and place with a depth and richness beyond any other previously published work.

Mark Weaver's essay considers the influences of Theodore Roosevelt, the Back to the Soil Movement, and the transcendentalists' philosophy on the creation of Craftsman Farms. He considers the "green" lifestyle demonstrated at Craftsman Farms which he suggests is even more relevant to us in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Mark Hewitt's essay helps us understand the variety and purpose of Stickley's original 650 acre landscape. He notes that it was "...to promote the ideals associated with the Arts and Crafts movement, tempered with the pragmatic bias that he learned as a farmer and businessman."

Peter Mars reflects on the buildings at Craftsman Farms, their materials, their forward-looking designs and functionality, and their subtle and thoughtful detail. Through the lens of materials and functionality, Mars helps us better focus our understanding of the elements of daily family life, use of green design, and the integration of buildings within the landscape at Craftsman Farms.

No discussion of the creation of Craftsman Farms would be complete without a discussion of education. After all, Stickley published a number of articles on his intention to create a school for boys at Craftsman Farms. Patricia Bartinique's essay helps us understand what he had in mind and why. She helps us grasp the educational concepts that influenced Stickley's thinking: Peter Kropotkin, John Dewey and, of course, Raymond Riordon.

As we celebrate the centennial of Craftsman Farms, we continue to recognize the importance of education at Craftsman Farms as we interpret the history of Craftsman Farms and make it relevant to our 21<sup>st</sup> century lives. We hope that these thoughtful essays will engage readers and inspire further scholarship in the field. 



# THE CASE OF THE MYSTERY POET...

## *The New Morris Plains.*

When first I came to Morris Plains  
Some sixteen years ago  
We did not have what we have now  
'Cause people told me so.

We did not have the Stickley girls  
To help us have good times  
Of all the good which they have  
done  
I could not tell in rhymes.

A stagnant lot we used to be  
Until you girls arrived  
But like a symphony you have helped  
And Morris Plains survived.

Dedicated to the new founders  
of a New Morris Plains. Who have not  
only helped me to thoroughly enjoy  
myself; but who have done as much  
for all Morris Plains and most of  
Mount Tabor.

By one who knows.  
JWB

Several poems were written to Marion Stickley while she lived at Craftsman Farms. Some were unsigned; others were enscribed with only the initials J.W.B.

The recent discovery of a circa 1910-1911 photograph in Marion Stickley's scrapbook has revealed the name John W. Bloodgood as the mystery author and admirer.

## *"That Sunday Walk"*

Along a dusty road we trod  
On climbing over the dusty road  
I thinking of heart and soul  
You looking for chestnuts to  
Do you like me, I don't know  
That's the way my mind  
would go  
Till at last I looked at you  
There of course I quickly knew  
Whether you liked me or not  
You had all the love we got.



The Eta Diurna Staff, 1910-1911

Just a picture of the school paper  
board. As rotten a picture as  
I have ever seen. Look at my  
nose.

John W. Bloodgood

John W. Bloodgood is second from the left in the back row. — Courtesy of Robert S. Preim



# 1911 - A YEAR AT CRAFTSMAN FARMS

— David Cathers

**D**uring a holiday visit to Syracuse at Christmas and New Year's, 1911 began happily for Mildred Stickley on December 29, 1910. That evening Henry Brown, whom she liked to call "Henrie," took her to the Holiday Ball at the Syracuse Hospital for Women and Children. There she waltzed and did the two-step with him and several other young men, and then wrote on her dance card, "I had a fine time with 'Henrie.' He sent me a glorious bunch of violets." The next night she went to the New Year's party at the home of her friend Belle Richards, spending the evening with another young man she liked, Babe Holdridge, and dated a third young man on January 2: "Art took me to see 'Follies' Nightmare," and it was a scream from beginning to end. Afterwards we went to the Onondaga [Hotel] and had good things to eat." During the next few days she was taken out to lunch and dinner, went to a party at her friend Marion Hellman's house, and then held an informal party on January 8: "The boys came up about six o'clock & we had a corking good time all the evening." The next day, the last full day of her stay, she and Belle and another friend strolled through downtown Syracuse after dinner, and, "We felt quite like a lark so we all walked down to [the] drugstore & had chocolate."

Taking the train back to New York City, her busy whirl continued while she spent several days staying in the apartment where her sister Barbara then lived. "Henry came up for dinner," on January 13, "and about eight o'clock took Barbara and myself to the auto show and we took the whole show in." She and Barbara spent the next few days clothes shopping, going out to lunch, and visiting friends. Her Manhattan visit ended on January 18th: "Packed my trunk and left on the twelve-fifteen for the farm. Gustav [her brother] met me at the train."



*At Craftsman Farms, Mildred Stickley cooked, cleaned, sewed, gardened, helped make cider and sausage, drove to the train station to pick up her father after his commute, and fed the chickens.*

— "The Craftsman," November 1912

Today, a hundred years after the Stickley family moved into the log house at Craftsman Farms, very little is known of their day-to-day life in Morris Plains. There are articles about the Farms in *The Craftsman* magazine, a handful of news items in the local paper, *The Jerseyman*, and the few recollections of some of Stickley's daughters, including Mildred, when they were interviewed in the 1970s and early 1980s. But a much more complete source has recently come to light: Mildred Stickley kept a diary in 1911, writing in it every day of the year, and before her death in 1974 she willed it to her granddaughter, Nancy Calderwood, who kindly made it available to the Craftsman Farms Foundation so that this



chapter could be published at the time of the Farms' centennial. Mildred's daily entries create a vivid, detailed picture of the Stickley family's life in 1911, and tell the story — as seen through her eyes — of a year at Craftsman Farms.

Gustav and Eda Stickley's second child, she is perhaps best remembered today because of the photograph of her feeding chickens at the Farms published in the November 1912 *Craftsman*. Mildred was twenty-two at the beginning of 1911, turning twenty-three in August, and she was the family's oldest child still living at home. Her older sister, Barbara, often visited Craftsman Farms, but most of the time she stayed in Manhattan, working in their father's office and dating the handsome young Ben Wiles, whom she would marry later that year. Mildred's other sisters, Hazel, Marion, and Ruth, and her brother Gustav Jr., lived at the Farms in 1911 and their names appear sporadically in her diary; reflecting her feelings about the age difference she felt between herself and her younger siblings, she sometimes collectively referred to them in her diary as "the children." Eda Stickley



*Mildred had fun times, too. Here she "flies an airplane," probably in a photographer's studio or at an amusement park, with her sister Ruth.*

— Courtesy of Ruth Glesmann

was usually at home, very occasionally going out to pay calls to neighbors or spend a day in New York, and twice that year she and her husband took brief vacations, auto trips in the family car. Most days Gustav commuted between Morris Plains and New York City, and Mildred or Marion would drive to the train station to bring him home in the evenings. At times he left to visit his factory in Syracuse. The family occasionally had guests on Sundays, though the only ones Mildred mentioned by name are people who worked with her father: Edward Schirmer and Charles White, both Craftsman company executives; Bessie Coons, also an employee from the New York City office; G. Tracy Rogers, a financier who was a long-time business associate of Stickley's and a widower who later married Miss Coons; Stickley's sister Christine (Aunt Tina to Mildred); a "Mr. Dennison," probably Stickley's patent attorney Howard P. Denison; and Harvey Genung, a local realtor who helped Stickley buy land for the farm. Mildred noted these routines, these comings and goings, recording them in her diary.

She began nearly every day by getting in the family car (or occasionally the family's horse-drawn carriage) and driving to Morristown to shop for groceries. Treated by her parents as almost an adult, she had responsibilities and took on many basic chores, such as sewing (she made dresses, underclothes, and curtains), dusting, straightening rooms, and making beds, though she also made meals when the family's cook was away, sewed Halloween costumes for her younger sisters, and handled the Farms' financial accounts. Her diary entries were



usually two or three brief paragraphs on the events of each day, and these are some of the chore-related excerpts: February 3: "Got up quite early as Mrs. McIntosh came to clean our bungalows. Well just about all to-day was spent in cleaning house ... I sewed most of the evening." April 5: "It is Marys day out so I got dinner." April 7: "To-day is cleaning day, and I wrote in my diary & checked up all the farm bills besides mending my underclothing after I finished dusting." September 6: "I sewed - read & picked some vegetables in the morning." October 31: "Worked on maquerade costumes for Ruth & Louise [a friend] the entire afternoon and then dressed them." November 26: "No cook and so quite busy." December 15: "I was busy all day making sausages." December 18: "Got up about a quarter to seven and got breakfast as our cook was away over night." Mildred willingly accepted these household duties, though she sometimes seemed overwhelmed by them, and, as Nancy Calderwood has observed, some of her diary entries have a Cinderella-like quality. For instance, as Mildred wrote on September 23: "All the family went to Madison in the car and I stayed home and did work. Then I did some gardening and sewed."

But life could be sweet at Craftsman Farms, and her diary records some of the things that she and her family did for fun. Nearly every day included going out for long rides in the car, and letter writing to friends and boy friends, who occasionally came for visits. She frequently did embroidery and read books, though the only title she mentions is Kipling's *The Light That Failed*. Throughout the year there were many pleasures. February 9: "After dinner we all went out slush-mugging [Whatever "slush-mugging" was it must have been fun] and had a fine ride — We went into dancing school with Gustav." February 16: "After dinnner we all went sleigh riding getting home about 11:30." On February 20 she mentioned the young men she had seen at Christmas in Syracuse: "Henry came up for dinner. Babe Holdridge phoned me. Henry and I played cards most all the evening." March 9: "Mother & I went to Morris Plains & had lunch at Days. We had a fine birth-day cake for father at dinner tonight." March 19: "Barbara, Hazel and myself had breakfast in bed and it seemed quite gay and festive." March 27: "I took 'Teddy' [one of the family's two dogs] and went for a walk - the brook was simply beautiful after the rain from the water rushing down the mountains." April 13: "I went for quite a car ride early in the morning - then came home and planted flower beds." April 26: "Took care of my flower garden in the morning & embroidered. At half past two I went in the auto to Chatham to meet Estelle — We took a long ride and then met Barb and Father. Estelle read and we embroidered in the evening." May 7: "Went out to Lake Hopatcong in the afternoon & had a fine ride." May 29: "Went to a minstrel show & dance at the hospital & had a very good time." July 4: "Ben came in the morning. Went to the lake about five to go bathing. We had fine fireworks in the evening & quite a bunch of people were here." July 11: "Had a fine time and danced in the evening. There were about 30 people here. Mother & father left for an auto trip at noon." September 2: "We had an informal dance at the house in the evening & I had a very good time. I was quite keen for Frank Morris." October 3: "Played bridge and poker all the evening." October 11: "Read out loud to father & mother after dinner." October 12:



"Went over to the hospital to dance in the evening & had a good time. It was a wonderful moonlight night ride in the car & that was better than the dance." November 16: "I cleaned apples all morning to make cider."

Perhaps the happiest, though most stress-inducing family event that year was Barbara's marriage to Ben Wiles. It is clear from Mildred's diary that Ben and Barbara were often together, and she seemed pleased when Ben proposed to her sister. Observing proper form, he sent a letter to Barbara's father asking for her hand, and on March 1 Mildred wrote: "First excitement in our family — Ben writes to father." Ben's offer of marriage could not have surprised anyone in the family, except perhaps "Father," who was initially taken aback at the thought of losing his oldest daughter. On March 2, Mildred dispassionately wrote: "Father feels quite broken up about Ben's letter but he must expect such things to happen with so many girls." In late September and early October, Mildred wrote invitations, helped decorate the log house with chrysanthemums and fall foliage, and joined in as Barbara planned the wedding day. On October 18, Mildred excitedly recorded that guests had begun to arrive: "All the out of town girls came in the afternoon — Had 17 for dinner. We talked and had a fine time in the evening." On October 19, she wrote: "Barb's day. Did the last few things in the morning - Guests arrived all day — rehearsal at 10:30. Beautiful wedding at 6:30 Barb looked adorable. Danced then Henry & I went to the depot with Barb & Ben. Broke my heart when she went. Danced again." Mildred had been maid of honor that day and Henry Brown was best man, though *The Jerseyman* listed her other young man, Earl B. Holdridge, among the wedding guests. Having had a wonderful time at the wedding, and already beginning to miss her sister, Mildred ended her diary entry for the day with a prosaic, Cinderella-sounding, detail: "I spent [the end of the evening] by locking everything up." But she was happy ten days later when the honeymooners returned and "Barb told me all about her glorious trip."

Mildred also shared the family's excitement about moving into what she called "the grand new house." She first mentions the log house on February 1: "Mother and I took a little walk right after breakfast to look at the new house." The next day she wrote that she and her mother and father spent the evening making plans for the new house. A month later she and her father and two of her sisters spent an afternoon inspecting the log house, and as she wrote on March 7: "Ed. Shirmer [Edward Schirmer, mentioned above] came out for dinner with father. We all went down and talked around the fireplace in the new house in the evening. We had a corking time." A week later she spent the morning sewing, and in the afternoon she and her mother and father "tried the new curtains in the new house." June 15 was a big day at Craftsman Farms: "Our train came with the furniture so I helped unpack nearly all the day long ... we talked and planned the different pieces of furniture all the evening." During the following weeks she unpacked and helped arrange more furniture and spent some days hanging curtains. The furnishings were mostly complete by September 1, the day her diary entry read, "Mr. Parker came to photograph the house in the morning." These were evidently Daniel Parker's now-familiar log house photographs



first published in *The Craftsman* that November and reprinted many times since. Later that year Mildred recorded that she and her father planned the landscape gardening around the new house, and by October 29 the family had settled comfortably into their new home; that night "We all talked around the fire in the evening."

Mildred's 1911 diary, however, is also the story of her bouts of unhappiness at Craftsman Farms. She often thought of her far away friends and the urban delights that had meant so much to her in Syracuse. As she wrote on April 9: "I think I miss living in a city more on Sunday than all the rest of the week." On May 3, she placed the blame for her isolation: "It surely is not right for father to take us all way out here without any excitement of any kind to amuse us." Perhaps sensing her discontent, two days later her father broached the subject with her and could not have liked her response: "Father asked my opinion on farm life. I certainly gave it in its real truth without any covering up the real dislikes." Though her unhappy notes sound throughout the diary, Mildred recognized that her father was an extraordinary man, endeavoring to lead a meaningful life, even though it was sometimes difficult for him and often hard on his family. As she wrote on September 7: "It is certainly a very hard thing to have a father an idealist."

Still, in some ways he indulged his daughters, and when Mildred felt hemmed-in by life at the farm she escaped to Manhattan and lived the life that the daughter of a prosperous businessman could expect. The Stickley family's affluence is apparent throughout the diary. March 20: "Came into New York on the club train. Went shopping with Barb and we went to the Waldorf for lunch — Barb treated and we had a corking time. Went ... to a party at the Republican Club dance and it was great fun with all kinds and conditions of people to amuse one. I met a lot of nice older men." June 1: "Babe Holdridge came for me at 2 o'clock [she was then visiting Barbara in the city] and we went to Coney Island on the boat and had a corking good time." August 5: "Went into New York in the morning -- Went shopping until lunch time and then went to the Waldorf for lunch — after lunch we went to see 'The Pink Lady' which was very clever with much good music ... left for home on the 7:40 train after having quite a festive day in New York." October 9: "Went into New York where I shopped all morning — had lunch at the Waldorf — we took a ride on the stage then Agatha [Agatha Gruber and her husband Bert were family friends] took us all to the Plaza for tea." November 8: "Father bought me a beautiful set of furs." November 18: "Went into New York on the 9:30 — shopped and got up to Barbara's in time for lunch [Barbara and Ben then lived on 181st Street]. Went to Mrs. Roberts' [Mary Fanton Roberts, editor of *The Craftsman*] reception in the evening and saw many interesting people. At almost twelve Ben took Barb & I to the College Inn to see the excitement after the Yale - Princeton game." November 21: "Went to the Holland House for dinner and to the Horse Show in the evening. It was certainly a mighty pretty sight and I had a good time." Articles in *The Craftsman* proposed making farm life more satisfying through the practice of handicrafts and by relieving the social and cultural isolation of people living in the country. Mildred Stickley was a craftswoman — a skilled needleworker — and her diary portrays the rural



pleasures of Craftsman Farms. But her 1911 diary also makes clear that she treasured the diversions of friends, restaurants, department stores, rides at Coney Island, and Broadway plays, available a short train ride away in the city.

As 1911 drew to a close, Mildred had begun to feel a kind of contentment about her life at Craftsman Farms. One day that month she enjoyed reading a magazine story to her sister Hazel, and on another day she met her father at the train station and drove him home. On December 18, "Father brought a very nice Frenchman out to dinner to-night," though Mildred didn't write down his name. On December 20, she "went out shopping in the



Wearing the "beautiful set of furs" that her father had given her, Mildred "drives a car" for another photograph, accompanied by her sister Marion.

— Courtesy of Robert S. Preim

carriage all the afternoon & came home nearly frozen." One morning she and Hazel walked to Morris Plains, and later that day Barbara, Ben, and Aunt Tina came out from the city for the holidays. She got cards and letters and "a corking present from Henrie." As she wrote on December 24, "We received our Xmas presents in the evening & they were all perfectly lovely. Just a family party in the evening." The day after Christmas she took a break from rural life and left for a week in Syracuse, joining in the round of dances, teas, luncheons, and parties. Art, the young man who had taken her to a play and out to dinner the year before, took her

to hear the Cornell Glee Club and then to a dance at the Onondaga Hotel. Henry Brown took her to a Cornell - Rochester hockey game and then they joined other friends for a post-game party. Her father, apparently in Syracuse on business that week, took her to lunch at the Yates Hotel. Though Mildred seems not to have sensed it, he probably understood his twenty-three-year-old daughter better than she knew, and realized that her dreams were not the same as his. The month before, after all, he had bought her that beautiful set of furs, clothes for the city, not for the farm. After one of the busiest days of her year-end Syracuse visit, Mildred Stickley opened her diary and wrote, "I had one glorious time." ❧

#### (Endnotes)

- <sup>1</sup> Raymond Riordon, "A Visit to Craftsman Farms: The Impression it Made and the Result: The Gustav Stickley School for Citizenship," *The Craftsman* 23 (November 1912), pp. 152-165.
- <sup>2</sup> For an article on Parker's Craftsman-furnished studio in Morristown, see "A Modern Studio Successfully Remodeled from an Old Hall with Artistic Results," *The Craftsman* 24 (April 1913), pp. 80 - 83.
- <sup>3</sup> Natalie Curtis, "The New Log House at Craftsman Farms," *The Craftsman* 21 (November 1911), pp. 197 - 204.





*A circa 1911 image of Marion Stickley at the south entrance to the Log House porch at Craftsman Farms. Note that the stone steps to the entrance have yet to be built.*

— Courtesy of Robert S. Preim



# CRAFTSMAN FARMS: GREEN LIVING IN 1911?

—Mark E. Weaver

Visitors to the present day Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms come for a variety of reasons. Some come purely out of curiosity; others are die-hard enthusiasts of the Arts and Crafts movement traveling to a Mecca of one of its patriarchs, Gustav Stickley. Then, there are those who come to experience an enclave demonstrating a lifestyle from another age that advocated a return to nature and living the “simple life.”

Gustav Stickley (1858-1942) sought to accomplish many things with Craftsman Farms. It was not just a home for his family; it was an experiment in simple living that he and his writers editorialized and marketed in his magazine, *The Craftsman*, published from 1901-1916. Stickley also sought to make the farm itself a profitable venture, originally planning a farm/crafts village to be called Craftsman Village, later a farm school for boys, and ultimately a working farm, producing and selling agricultural products. This essay briefly looks at some of the influences that guided Stickley in building Craftsman Farms, and considers whether those influences might be early examples of today's Green Living movement.

Green Living has been defined today as, “any action or activity that results in a positive impact, to any degree, on the environment, so that the planet can continue to support future generations.” When Stickley introduced his Catalog No. 1 “New Furniture” in 1900, the United States was suffering from a socioeconomic imbalance between rural and urban industries. The industrial age prior to and after the Civil War had restructured American life. The agricultural tradition that had defined the nation was being decimated by the high costs of commodity warehousing and transportation caused by the railroads of the Gilded Age. Much of the traditional rural work force was abandoning farming for a chance at a better life in the modern urban environment.

In the November 1908 issue of *The Craftsman*, an article by Stickley entitled “Why Farming Lacks Interest to the Average Farmer” reflected back to his youth on the family's small Wisconsin farm, and his distaste for farming then: “I wanted to get away into a larger life; to do work that I felt would be more congenial and that would give me a chance to make a place for myself in the world. It never occurred to me that I could do this on the farm.”

## *Gustav Stickley and Theodore Roosevelt: Conservationists*

President Theodore Roosevelt took office in September 1901 following the assassination of President William McKinley. Roosevelt was well aware of the state of rural America, and immediately began to promote policies to conserve and reclaim it. This reverence for the land struck a chord with many people who considered it a counter to the poor social



conditions that resulted from the urbanization movement, and the economic domination of big monopolies. "Progressive"<sup>1</sup> thinking citizens like Roosevelt sought to repair the nation through better regulation of big business, and stressed conservation and reclamation of the nation's rural areas.

In the January 1908 *Craftsman*, an editorial appeared that voiced the magazine's similar concerns:

"It is characteristic of us as a nation to reach out for big things and to try to gain them by quicker and easier means than primitive hard work. It is this quality which has made possible the gigantic growth of the factory system and the same quality which has induced people to flock to the cities in search of employment in some big industrial or commercial concern, believing that by doing so they might come in touch with a larger life and lay the foundation for a more permanent prosperity than could be had in the smaller towns or on the farm. Yet we are beginning to realize even now that this tendency on the part of the people, which has resulted in such immense growth to all the larger industries, may mean the ultimate disintegration of our national life."<sup>2</sup>



One of many political cartoons featuring the conservationist president Theodore Roosevelt. This one appeared in the 1908 St. Paul, Minn., *Pioneer Press*.

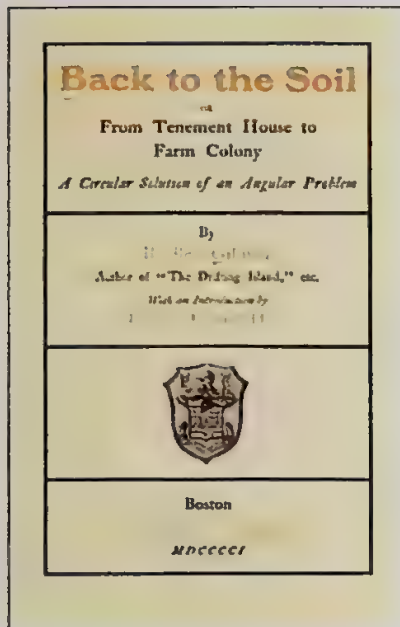
The first Country-Life Conference 1908 gave birth to the National Commission on Country Life. Roosevelt appointed Liberty Hyde Bailey to head the newly formed Commission. In a 1911 report, *The Country-Life Movement*, Bailey wrote that:

"...[t]he country-life movement is the working out of the desire to make rural civilization as effective and satisfying as other civilization [meaning urban]...It is not an organized movement proceeding from one center or even expressing one set of ideas. It is a world-motive to even up society as between country and city; for it is generally understood that country life has not reached as high development within its sphere as city life has reached within its sphere...The past century belonged to the city; the present century should belong also to agriculture and the open country."

It is not known whether Roosevelt read *The Craftsman*. However, author David Cathers states, "Stickley became interested in land conservation and reclamation as a result of President Theodore Roosevelt's policies."<sup>3</sup>



Throughout Roosevelt's presidency, Stickley's magazine published many articles on conservation, social, and environmental issues. In the second issue of *The Craftsman*, published just two months after Roosevelt took office, editor Irene Sargent (1852-1932)



wrote a review of a new book entitled *Back to the Soil* by Unitarian minister Bradley Gilman. Gilman's book advocated moving the urban poor to small craft and farming villages for a better and healthier lifestyle. Sargent wrote that Gilman, "offers an ideal of a rural community of working-people, in which he employs a unique method of grouping the homes as closely as possible, and of adding 'minor industries' and 'small handicrafts' to relieve the monotony of farm duties."<sup>4</sup>

Stickley and Roosevelt were also both well versed in the writings of the French Protestant minister Charles Wagner, author of *The Simple Life*. In the book, Wagner rhetorically asked, "What materials does a man need to live under the best conditions? A healthful diet, simple clothing, a sanitary dwelling-place, air and exercise."<sup>5</sup> Wagner traveled the United States in the fall of 1904 on a lecture tour at the invitation of Roosevelt. On that tour, he lectured at Stickley's Craftsman Building in Syracuse.

### *Gustav Stickley and the Transcendentalists*

Stickley was also influenced by writers John Ruskin, William Morris, and the transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, all of whom were quoted in *The Craftsman*. He shared their romantic visions of the educational, physical, and psychological benefits from working on the land. Just below an illustration of a log cabin in the May 1905 issue of *The Craftsman* he quoted Emerson:

"We are students of words: we are shut up in schools and colleges, and recitation-room, for ten or fifteen years and come out at last with a bag of wind, a memory of words, and do not know a thing. We cannot use our hands, or our legs, or our eyes, or our arms. We do not know an edible root in the woods, we can not tell our course by the stars, nor the hour of the day by the sun... The Roman rule was to teach a boy nothing that he could not learn standing. The old English rule was, "All summer in the field, and all winter in the study."<sup>6</sup>

### *Back to the Farm*

In 1908, buoyed by these Progressive political views and transcendental philosophies, and enjoying the fruits of his prosperity, Stickley decided to contribute to the "back to the soil"

movement by building Craftsman Farms. As his plans came together, he explained in the November 1908 *Craftsman*, "Now when in middle life I turn back to farming because of the interest and pleasure I find in it..."

By the later part of 1908, Stickley had purchased 650 acres of farmland in Morris Plains, New Jersey, where for a brief time he planned to build two furniture factories — not a very "Green" activity — and then a craft/farm village to be called Craftsman Village. He had first conceived the idea of a village while on a trip to California in 1904 with his guide and friend George Wharton James. However, just before he broke ground at Craftsman Farms in July 1909, Stickley discussed his plan for starting a farm school for boys at Craftsman Farms in an article in *The Craftsman* entitled: "Farm Life As the Basis of Practical Education."

"...the first step in creating what we regard as an ideal environment for a school is to commence active farming operations. The next is the building of our homes, our clubhouse and other necessary structures; and the last will be the erection of shops for master craftsmen of all sorts who will ply their trades for a livelihood and at the same time act as instructors for student apprentices."

He continued to write about the development of Craftsman Farms in *The Craftsman* during 1910. Written as interviews of Stickley as the "Host," the articles provide a great deal of insight into the pride and dedication that Stickley felt for his "Garden of Eden." Stickley was obviously proud of his land reclamation accomplishments, but also used the magazine to market his Craftsman ideals.

In the September 1910 issue, the article entitled, "A Visit to Craftsman Farms: The Study of An Educational Ideal" discussed Stickley's overall concept of the landscape and scheme of buildings on the property. The primary theme is the visitor's release from "the turmoil of a crowded metropolis on a hot June day...where, as though in quiet defiance of the discordant roar of the city, the deep green of the forest's 'talking leaves' seemed to repeat that no life were truly life, no wisdom truly wise without the 'open world' and the teachings of Nature."

In his role as "host," Stickley points out the new roads, cottages and orchards, boasting that, "there was nothing here but abandoned farms when we began a year ago." The "visitor" admiringly comments that the buildings, built using stone and chestnut trees from the property looked, "as though they had grown on that hillside as naturally as had the oaks and maples around them." He points out that "there was nothing superfluous but there was everything necessary to practical living and to comfort." Charles Wagner, would have approved.



In the October issue, the host (Stickley) welcomes the visitor to one of the new cottages that had been completed at the Farms. The host describes his plan to divide the property into half-acre lots with small Craftsman houses and sell them to people so they could “experiment with country life and the cultivation of a garden.”

### *The Fruits of his Labors*

Although Stickley never realized his plan for a farm community, Craftsman Farms did become a working farm that he personally managed. The farm included pasturelands, vineyards, orchards, as well as poultry and dairy operations. In what would be considered today as “free range,” Stickley’s care of his herd of Holstein cows is described in the 1913 menu for his *Craftsman Restaurant* in New York City:

“In order to ensure a high quality of milk, the cattle must be kept both healthy and happy. They need plenty of fresh air and pure water and well-balanced rations, as well as clean surroundings, and a certain amount of exercise. Moreover, as the nervous condition of the cows naturally affects both the quantity and quality of the milk, it is important that they be treated with kindness.”

Stickley supplied his restaurant daily with products from Craftsman Farms. He explained his locavore philosophy in the restaurant’s menu:

“My theory about a restaurant is that to be the right sort of an eating place it must be closely related to its source of supplies. In no other way can it be fully hygienic and satisfactory. The farm products must come direct from producer to consumer. To test this theory, I decided to combine the Craftsman Restaurant with the Craftsman Farms, and to bring my farm products to my restaurant table in New York without the delay, and the consequent deterioration of food inevitable in many handlings by wholesale and retail dealers.”<sup>7</sup>

Throughout his planning and building of Craftsman Farms, Stickley sought to make the property an example of a better and simpler way of life. He felt that the conservation and reclamation of the property, the natural approach to the building of its structures, and the production of quality organic agricultural products harkened back to the beginnings of our agrarian nation.

For a brief period, from July 1910 to August 1917, Gustav Stickley and his family were able to enjoy the environment he created at Craftsman Farms. In his almost prophetic essay of 1870 entitled “Society and Solitude,” Ralph Waldo Emerson could have been writing about Stickley and his relationship with Craftsman Farms at the end when he wrote:

Then the beauty of nature, the tranquility and innocence of the countryman, his independence, and his pleasing arts, — the care of bees, of poultry, of sheep, of cows, the dairy, the care of hay, of fruits, of orchards and forests, and the reaction of these on the workman, in giving him a strength and plain dignity like the face and manners of nature, — all men acknowledge. All men keep the farm in reserve as an asylum where, in ease of mischance, to hide their poverty, — or a solitude, if they do not succeed in society. And who knows how many glances of remorse are turned this way from the bankrupts of trade, from mortified pleaders in courts and senates, or from the victims of idleness and pleasure? Poisoned by town life and town vices, the sufferer resolves: 'Well, my children, whom I have injured, shall go back to the land, to be recruited and cured by that which should have been my nursery, and now shall be their hospital.'

If he were alive today, I think Stickley would be in the thick of the "Green Movement," publishing articles in *The Craftsman* inducing its readers to live a simpler lifestyle. One only has to walk the grounds of Craftsman Farms today to see that Stickley made a "positive impact on the environment." Thanks to the township of Parsippany-Troy Hills, New Jersey and the Craftsman Farms Foundation, visitors to the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms can continue to escape the turmoil of the crowded metropolis, and learn from the teachings of nature. 🌿



Holstein cows roamed the fields at Craftsman Farms. Gustav Stickley believed in what we now call free-range grazing for his livestock.  
— *The Craftsman*, October 1913

#### (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/glossary/progressive-era.htm>, (Last visited on Feb. 7, 2011)

<sup>2</sup> The Editor, Als Ik Kan, *The Craftsman*, (January 1908), pp. 486-492

<sup>3</sup> David Cathers, *Gustav Stickley*, pp. 186-187

<sup>4</sup> Irene Sargent, "Back to the Soil": a review, *The Craftsman*, (November 1901), pp. [21]-26

<sup>5</sup> Charles Wagner, *The Simple Life*, Chapter 6, pp. 68-69

<sup>6</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, A Lecture read before the Society in Amory Hall, on Sunday, 3 March, 1844

<sup>7</sup> Gustav Stickley, *Craftsman Restaurant Menu*, Page 4, paragraph 2, line 4



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"I LIKE THE HOUSES TO BE GROUPED TOGETHER, SAID MR. STICKLEY, MORE INTIMATELY "THE CRAFTSMAN." IT MAKES LIFE SIMPLER, MORE FRIENDLY."

Gustav Stickley, *The Craftsman*, October 1913

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*The north and south cottages at Craftsman Farms, rear views as seen from the west.*

— *The Craftsman*, November 1912

## GUSTAV STICKLEY'S AGRARIAN LANDSCAPE

— Mark Alan Hewitt, FAIA

In 1908, when Gustav Stickley began buying land near Morris Plains, New Jersey, he was but one of many wealthy New Yorkers looking for a watering hole with rail connections to the city. Morristown and the Somerset Hills had recently developed a Mountain Colony filled with summer places for New York Society.<sup>1</sup> What set him apart from others pursuing the ideal of country life was not an interest in gardens or fresh air but his experience as a farm boy, carrying from his childhood a keen sensitivity to the virtues of agrarian life. Moreover, Stickley saw the clear need for the conservation of farmland long before proponents of sustainable land use came on the scene in the late twentieth century.

Craftsman Farms, his 650-acre utopian property in Morris County, was originally agricultural land, in cultivation for more than a century by hardy local farmers. It remained largely rural until after World War II, when the “garden state” began to be suburbanized. It is easy to forget that much of New Jersey was dedicated to agriculture before the mid-twentieth century, and that its dairy and vegetable production helped to sustain the New York metropolitan area as it rose to become the world’s financial center.



*Two pairs of stone piers topped with cascading ivy and petunias marked off the road to the lower pasture lands looking east toward New York City over a valley and rolling hills.*

— The Craftsman, October 1913

It was the beauty and fertility of Morris County that first attracted Stickley to the place he would call home for more than a decade. After visiting Red Gables, the home of Hearst cartoonist Homer Davenport, he set about finding land for his own country oasis near Morris Plains. Between 1908 and 1911 he purchased more than 24 separate properties, some forested, but many already cleared for agricultural use.<sup>2</sup> One, the Garrigus farm, was adjacent to today’s museum site, and its farmhouse existed until a few years ago. When Gus began to design his compound, he clearly meant to preserve and enhance the rural character of the site, not groom it into a palatial country villa.



Stickley had an abiding concern for maintaining the farm landscape that he had come to know as a boy in Wisconsin, and wrote consistently about his vision in *The Craftsman* magazine. In Volume 14, he published an extensive article on "Farming Allied With Handcrafts," advancing a scheme for combining small-scale handicrafts with local farming as a means of furthering the Jeffersonian ideal of a nation built on agriculture. *The Craftsman* promoted the idea that America's labor problem could be ameliorated by encouraging, with government incentives, the cultivation of 10-acre farms in both urban and suburban areas, on which a family might both subsist materially and also contribute to the food supply. Each farm family would also undertake to learn and produce handicrafts such as metalwork, cabinetwork, rugs, or textiles. "The relief from the strain of meeting each day's burdensome demand for ready money to provide the barest necessities of life," he wrote, "and the certainty that every industrious and skilful worker would be sure of all the work he could do, — whether in the shop or on the farm, — would go far toward bringing about that attitude of confidence in himself and interest in doing good work which means so much to the intrinsic value of hand-work and adds so largely to the earning power of the worker." Craftsman Farms was to be the first laboratory and school to test this theory.<sup>3</sup>

Spurred by the ideal of merging handicraft production with farming, Stickley planned Craftsman Farms to be a hybrid of current forms of dwelling, farming and work. This hybrid of ideas is the key to understanding the natural and human-made landscape at Craftsman Farms. To be sure, Gus was familiar with the work of William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll in England, pioneers of wild gardening, but it was not their work that guided his vision. He invented the rural landscape one sees today from images and concepts from America's past, projected on the future — the woodlands of Wisconsin, Native American camps, small farms in New Jersey, English craft guilds, artisan workshops, and even the Great Camps of the Adirondacks.

Between 1910 and 1914 Craftsman Farms was a working dairy, fruit and vegetable farm, a residential compound, a vineyard, and a rural retreat for the Stickley family. Some of its activities were commercial, such as the daily purveying of dairy and farm products to Stickley's Craftsman Restaurant in Manhattan. Some were educational, as it served as a laboratory for decorative art experiments and a library for its owner. But mainly the place was a country retreat, a modern home for the *villegiatura* so precious to European culture since Roman times. As such, Craftsman Farms combined a poetic concept of landscape with the ideal of cultivation and fertility, just as Cicero and Pliny had done in their country houses centuries before.

Just how was the landscape designed to do this? First, Stickley maintained the essentially rural, wooded quality of the site by carving meandering gravel roads and paths along the hillsides and in hollows by a stream. His "Woodthrush Glen" (the wooded area along the stream on the south side of the property) was intended to be an Olmstedian "ramble" for leisurely walks from the Log House. The approach road, through the Garrigus farm and

what is now Route 53 (Mount Tabor Road), was picturesque and above all vernal. No man-made objects appeared until one saw the Log House at a distance from the east. Even as one approached, gates and walls made of large boulders marked the limits of the property, the not formal pieces of architecture typical of large estates.

The initial impression for the visitor was of a natural, wooded landscape that bordered on pastures and farmland, and this was Stickley's intention. Natalie Curtis saw it on her first visit, as she marveled at how every gesture was aimed to resonate with nature, especially the rustic architecture of chestnut logs and native stone. The staged pictures of Holsteins grazing in the east pasture, beyond the vegetable garden, made certain that *Craftsman* readers could appreciate what Curtis saw.<sup>4</sup>



*The sunken rose garden at Craftsman Farms as pictured in the October 1913 issue of "The Craftsman."*

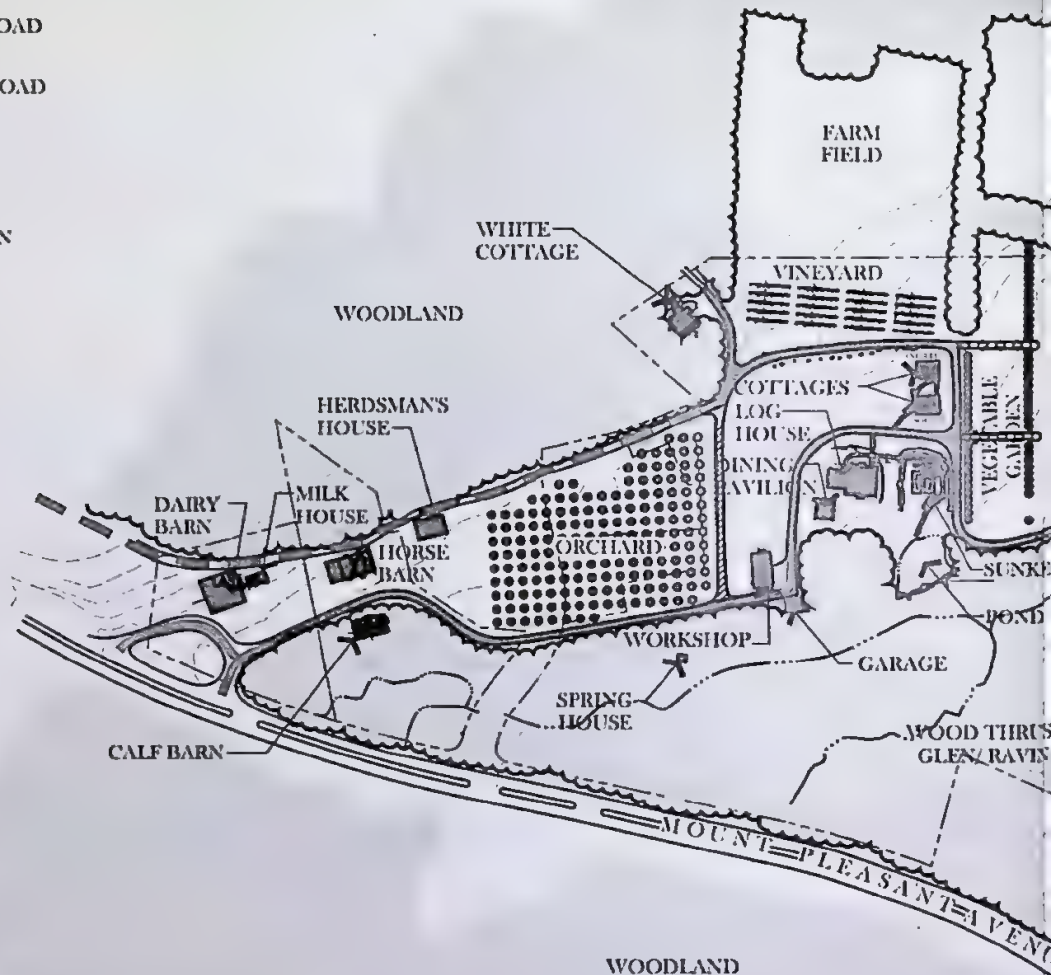
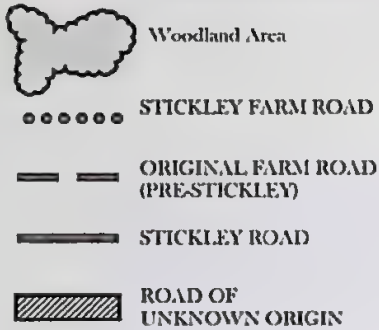
Above the Log house was a vineyard planted with grapes from the Loire valley, below was a rustic pond. In order to maintain the soft and sinuous lines of the terrain, Stickley's tea rose garden was a sunken circle bordered in stone retaining walls that could be seen from the verandah above, or from the outdoor dining area to the south of the Log House. Garden plants were mainly local species, though gardeners also groomed boxwood and arbor vitae as a means of delineating spaces around buildings. As in many American gardens, vines and flowering shrubs were encouraged to grow over and around architectural features to further soften their textures. There was not a straight line anywhere.

Following the recent cultural landscape report by B.W. Bosenberg & Company, it has been possible to uncover some of the founder's original structural elements for the gardens around the Log House. Though historic photos showed his propensity for building stone piers as gates, nothing prepared the researchers for the number of "rock sculptures" scattered throughout the property. Apparently, Gus was intent on using natural stone

*(continued on page 26)*



# LEGEND



## Map Sources:

Craftsman Farms (wetlands map)  
(Lot 31, Block 25, Tax Map Sheet 34)  
Township of Parsippany - Troy Hills, Morris County, New Jersey

"Craftsman Farms" Temple University  
Stickley Period c. 1916  
Morris Plains, New Jersey  
Landscape Architect and Horticulture, Fall Junior Studio 1994  
Sara J. Hedstrom

Archeology.jpg - Scan  
Hunter Research  
120 West State Street  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
609-605-0122

Google Earth Aerial  
Image © 2007 State of New Jersey  
© 2007 Europa Technologies  
© 2007 Tele Atlas

Craftsman Farms Existing Site Plan  
March 6, 1992  
School of Architecture, New Jersey Institute of Technology  
Advanced Options Studio, 1992

Craftsman Farms - First Floor Plan (Log House)  
May 9, 1992  
School of Architecture, New Jersey Institute of Technology  
Advanced Options Studio, 1992

"Roots In the Ground" A historic Landscape Study of Craftsman Farms

Parsippany - Troy Hills, New Jersey  
Site in 1998, Drawing 2  
Mary K. Muckenhoupt  
April 1998

"Roots In the Ground" A historic Landscape Study of Craftsman Farms  
Parsippany - Troy Hills, New Jersey  
Core Area Vegetation, Drawing 4  
Mary K. Muckenhoupt  
April 1998

Craftsman Farms Tree Identification  
Done Winter of 1992  
By: J S L Greentree, Landscape Architect  
Sheep Hill Rd.  
Doonton Twp., NJ 07005  
Field Assistance: Lorraine Caruso, Botanist

Topographic Map, Township of Parsippany - Troy Hills  
Morris County, New Jersey  
Compiled By: International Resources and Geotechnics, Inc.  
Contour Interval = 2', December 1972  
Sheet No. 3652

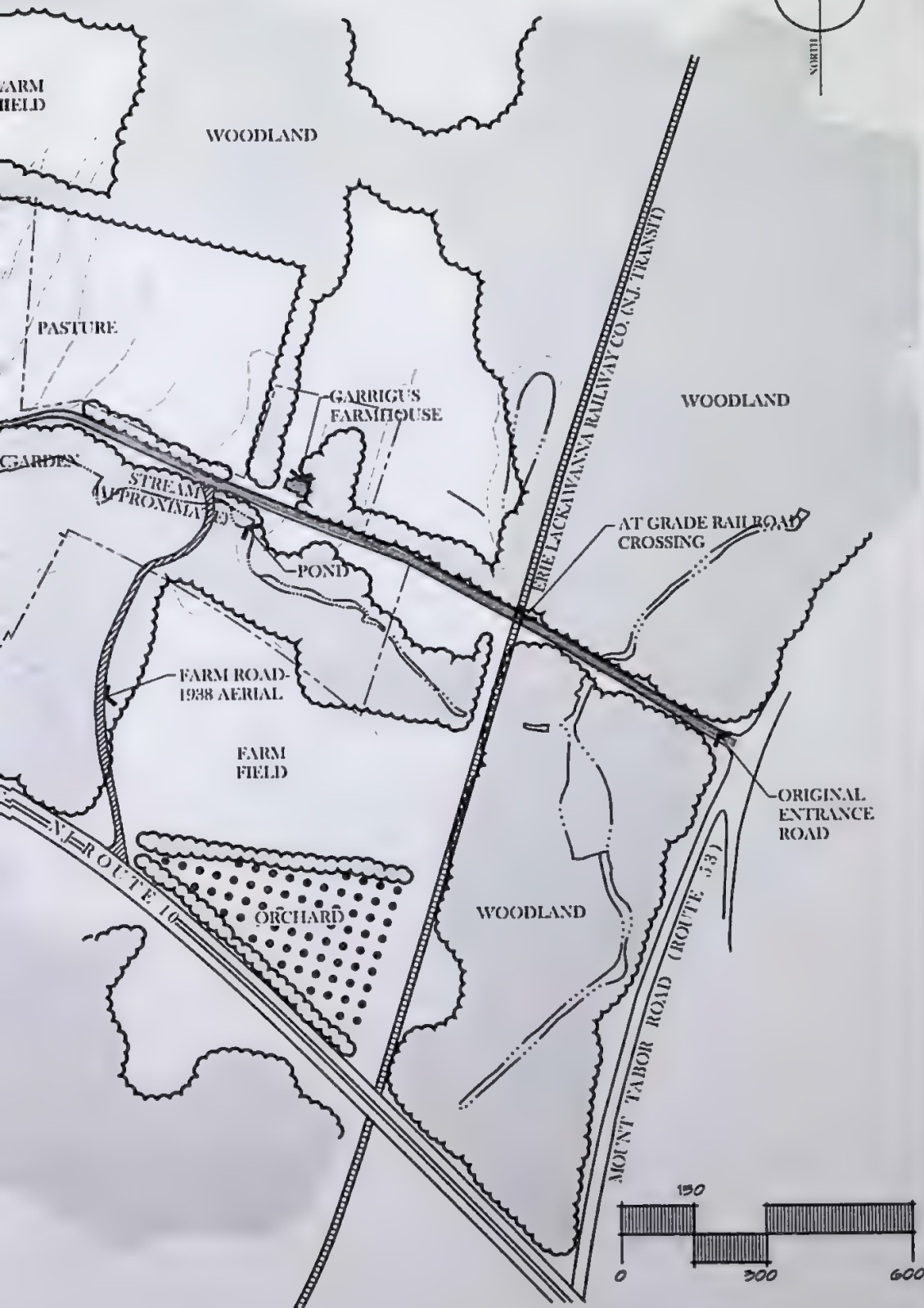
Topographic Map, Township of Parsippany - Troy Hills  
Morris County, New Jersey  
Compiled By: International Resources and Geotechnics, Inc.  
Contour Interval = 2', March 1975  
Sheet No. 3649  
Tax Map, Township of Parsippany - Troy Hills - Sheet 34  
Morris County, New Jersey, October 2001

Glen J. Lloyd, L.S., Schoor Depalma  
160 Littleton Rd. Suite 300  
P O Box 5245  
Parsippany, NJ 07054

Tax Map - Township of Parsippany - Troy Hills, Sheet 35  
Morris County, New Jersey  
December 1971  
International Resources and Geotechnics, Inc.  
Westchester County Airport  
White Plains, NY

Architectural Building Floor Plans for:  
White Cottage, Chicken Coop, Dairy Barn, Horse Barn, Garage,  
North Cottage, South Cottage, Offices, Annex  
Mark Hewitt Architects  
114 Claremont Rd.  
Bernardsville, NJ 07924

Craftsman Farms 1938 Aerial - No Source Information



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# Craftsman Farms

Parsippany-Troy Hills, New Jersey

Stickley Era Circulation

Scale: 1" = 300'

AUGUST 25, 2009

Map Number - 4



from the site as a leitmotif, much as a farmer might have built his hedgerow walls with available stone. Perhaps hundreds exist — in the vineyard, along the streambed, and even on the farm property. This painting with stones makes sense when one considers the rich geological resources in the Highlands region.<sup>5</sup>

Another nod to rural archetypes was Stickley's modern farmstead on the western side of the site, which now borders Mount Pleasant Turnpike. An old farm road above the site indicates that there may have been barns at this location prior to the Stickley era, but nothing definitive was discovered in 2008 and 2009. In any case, the innovative dairy barn, silo and "milk house" that the founder constructed were meant to convey a serious commitment to intensive farming using contemporary methods. At this time we are not aware of how many farm workers or specialists worked in these structures, but it is clear that Stickley intended to sustain much more than a typical *ferme ornée* at Craftsman Farms.

Around this compound of buildings the landscape was largely utilitarian, as might be expected. There were no overt gestures toward "naturalization," or softening of textures; rather, the buildings stood in open areas with a few trees for shade. However, Stickley did make more extensive use of stone as a building material in the calf barn, horse barn, and dairy buildings. The soft, light-colored limestone and bluestone, tinged with iron deposits, gives these buildings a strong indigenous character that would have blended with the soil and trees on this side of the site. Of course, there was also much natural chestnut in the buildings, augmented here with cedar shingles.

An often-overlooked element in this farm landscape was the presence of both animals and machines to do the heavy work. In addition to livestock and poultry, there were horses for plowing and trucks to haul milk to market. Tractors and smaller vehicles tended the fields and managed the harvest. Stickley's daughters remembered their father being actively involved in the day to day operations of the Farms, so it is clear that he relished the buzz of activities and saw them as a constituent part of his life in New Jersey.

Like most of Stickley's work, the landscape at Craftsman Farms was an attempt to promote ideals associated with the Arts and Crafts movement, tempered with the pragmatic bias that he learned as a farmer and businessman. On the east side of the site, the natural and the wild gardens suggested the former, while on the west the utilitarian farm buildings adhered to the latter. Just as he had written about combining agriculture with handicrafts, he was compelled to demonstrate both gardening and farm industries at his own country retreat.

Though much of the pastureland, woodlands, and all of the fields surrounding the main compound have vanished, replaced by suburban development, it is still possible to apprehend the essential landscape that Stickley designed at Craftsman Farms. The

essence of that landscape is agrarian in the widest sense of the word: fertile, productive, seasonal, natural, animated by flora and fauna. As the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms continues its ambitious restoration of this unique place, more visitors will be able to appreciate the vision of its founder. 🌿

(Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> On the development of these areas, see See John C. Turpin and Barry Thomson, *New Jersey Country Houses: The Somerset Hills* (Mountain Colony Press, 2 vols., 2003 & 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Mark Alan Hewitt, *Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Farms: The Quest for an Arts and Crafts Utopia* (Syracuse Univ. Press, 2001), p.111.

<sup>3</sup> Anonymous, "Small Farming and Profitable Handicrafts: A General Outline of the Practical Features of the Plan: by the Editor," *The Craftsman*, 14:1 (April 1908): 56. In the same volume, the magazine also began publishing a series of articles on the practical development of this plan, written mainly by Edgar J. Hollister, the organizer of the Winona Lake Agricultural Institute in Indiana.

<sup>4</sup> Natalie Curtis, "The New Log House at Craftsman Farms: An Architectural Development of the Log Cabin," *The Craftsman* 23:2 (Nov. 1911), pp.196-203.

<sup>5</sup> B.W. Bosenberg & Company, Landscape Architects, "Craftsman Farms: Cultural Landscape Report," 2009, unpublished.





## ON THE DEAR OLD FARM: GATHERING IDEAS FROM AN IDEAL

—Peter K. Mars

Craftsman Farms was Gustav Stickley's dream home in Morris Plains, New Jersey, where he lived with his family from 1910 to 1917. During a career in which his Craftsman architects produced more than 220 house plans, this was the only home he designed and built for his own use.<sup>1</sup> For Stickley, Craftsman Farms was a subject of great pride, intense analysis and broad promotion, as witnessed in eighteen articles featured in his magazine, *The Craftsman*.



*The finished Log House is similar to a 1908 sketch published in The Craftsman, but differs in significant ways.*

Through these articles it is clear that Craftsman Farms wasn't to be a mere 'farm.' It was to be a living, working laboratory for the many ideas about modern farm life expressed by Stickley and his experts in *The Craftsman*. The core of the Farms was to be a boys' agricultural and crafts school with a curriculum based in experiential learning.<sup>2</sup> There would be a community of students, teachers and as many as twenty other like-minded families coming together to live, learn and share this new, modern agrarian lifestyle<sup>3</sup> on 650 acres of wooded farmland

traversed by local roads and a direct train line to New York City.<sup>4</sup> The picture would be complete when his factory moved from his former home base of Syracuse, New York, to Craftsman Farms.

*The Craftsman's* first article about the Farms appeared in October 1908.<sup>5</sup> It was a voluminously illustrated eighteen-page article, not about the Farms itself, but specifically about the house Mr. Stickley planned to build for his wife and six children. The article expresses his utter joy at designing his own home and lays out the Craftsman theory on residential architecture and how this home, and Craftsman houses in general, with their simplicity, functionality and suitability to location, contribute to a definition of a truly American architecture.

The exterior of the Stickley family home was to be built of local fieldstone on the first floor.<sup>6</sup> Upper floors would feature half timber framing with hollow masonry tile walls and exterior plaster "given a rough, pebble-dash finish and a tone of dull brownish green" to help it blend with its surroundings.<sup>7</sup> The interior was to be, by today's standards, lavishly outfitted

in clean-lined paneling of American chestnut, colored plaster friezes, tiled fireplaces and oak flooring. Above the first floor, private spaces would each host a different native species of wood trim: "...Georgia pine, ash, hazel, maple, birch, beech and California redwood, each one of which shows a color quality that differs from all the others and yet harmonizes with all, so that the whole group of woods could be used in one room without any sense of discord."<sup>8</sup>

Like the experimental use of different wood species in the private spaces of his home, a November 1908 article said that every building at the Farms would be different in character and materials, making each a design experiment for its individual locale while using native woods and local materials wherever practicable. Stickley hoped to use this as a learning tool for readers of *The Craftsman*, his students, who would participate in construction, and future visitors to Craftsman Farms.<sup>9</sup>



*The proposed club house, before it became the Stickley's home. The form is similar, but the finished Log House has an enclosed porch, a shingled second story and a fieldstone kitchen wing off the back.*  
—The Craftsman, December 1908

As often happens in the early stages of an ambitious plan, these first articles are vibrant with details and plans for buildings that were never built. One exception is a December 1908 article about the log and colored plaster clubhouse that became the Stickley family home.<sup>10</sup> The building shown is similar in general form but differs greatly in plan and materials to the Log House that exists today.

While most of his early dreams for the Farms were never achieved, Mr. Stickley succeeded in building a remarkably beautiful, functional, modern farm compound comprised of twelve buildings, designed and built by his own Craftsman architects and Craftsman Home Building Company:<sup>11</sup> the clubhouse (now known as the Log House), three two-bedroom bungalow cottages, cow and horse stables, a milk house, a calf barn and machine shed, a large workshop, a spring house, a two car garage and a building assumed to have been a workers' cottage.



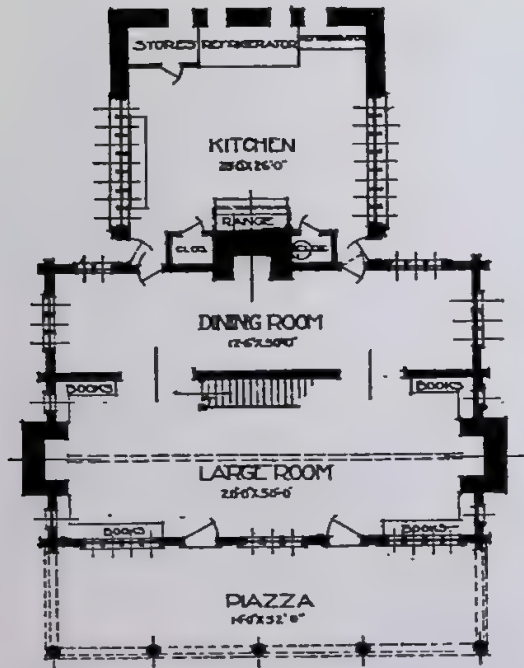
*The twin cottages were the first two structures completed at the Farms. Materials and details used here set the tone for the rest of the buildings.*

In 1909, a year that must have been intense with road building, readying fields, staking foundations and building two of the three cottages, the Farms didn't garner a single



mention in *The Craftsman*. By the time of the groundbreaking for the twin cottages (the first two structures erected), a decisive break was made from the idea of using each building as a design experiment. Instead, the twin cottages emerged with a controlled palette of materials, details and colors that were consequently used in the rest of the buildings at Craftsman Farms. This decision brought a strong architectural harmony to the compound even amongst strikingly different buildings (see the Materials and Details chart).

Starting in 1910, articles in *The Craftsman* portrayed the Farms as it was built, expounding upon its beauty and the many plans for its future but leaving out discussion of the design process that brought it toward its finished state.



LOG HOUSE AT CRAFTSMAN  
FARMS: FIRST FLOOR PLAN

The footprint of the log house is a 50' square, including the front porch, with a 25' square kitchen wing attached at the back. This use of squares as a planning device is consistent with all of the Farms' buildings.

One design mystery is the choice of the square as the geometric device for floor plans. Though it works very well for the buildings at the Farms, the *Craftsman* architects produced only a handful of square plans,<sup>12</sup> making it an unusual choice for Mr. Stickley's own home. For instance, the body of the Log House is a 50' square with a 25' square kitchen wing attached at the back, while the horse stable is 40' x 80', or two equal squares connected side by side. This is consistent with the plans of all the buildings at Craftsman Farms. However atypical, this device promotes an overall effect of wide, broad buildings that sit firmly in the landscape. Coupled with time-honored material choices that are easily justified with specific mentions in *The Craftsman*,<sup>13</sup> the Farms' buildings possess a sense of age and permanence beyond their single century.

### *Incorporating Laborsaving Design*

Technologically Craftsman Farms hovers in the balance between the pre and post electric world. Due in part to a profusion of wealthy estate owners and the nearness of Bell Laboratories, electricity came to Morris Plains in 1909,<sup>14</sup> concurrent with the construction of the Farms. Buildings at the Farms were wired for municipal electricity, placing it decades ahead of the 90% of rural American farms that didn't have municipal electricity until after the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.<sup>15</sup>

In our current push-button world, it's hard to imagine the impact that simple electric lighting had on everyday life a century ago. By eradicating open flame as a light source, electricity's greatest contribution to modern life was a greatly reduced risk of fire. From the viewpoint of work, efficiency and cleanliness, electricity produced light that was consistent

and unflickering, eliminating smoke, wick trimming, dripping wax, spilled oil, strong smells and sooty deposits on surfaces. Electric room lighting allowed greater flexibility of movement and removed the danger of carrying a light source from place to place.

Mr. Stickley believed strongly in laborsaving design and he knew well the efficiencies that electricity brought to his factory<sup>16</sup> and home in Syracuse. At Craftsman Farms he made many innovative choices that lie on both sides of the technological and labor saving balances of the day. Some were prudent choices, given the state of various technologies, but all, even ones that weren't quite so labor saving, adhered strongly to his Craftsman ideals.

Upon entering the Log House, the fifty-foot long, east-facing front porch was a model of Craftsman home efficiencies. Daylight flooded the room through twenty large, 15-pane windows and two Dutch doors, giving excellent visibility. Twelve electric #673 Craftsman lanterns offered night lighting. Low concrete walls supporting the windows were painted in enamel for easy cleaning. Bare, poured concrete floors bordered in common brick were installed with centrally located drains. A hose bib at one end of the room allowed convenient bucket filling for mopping. If necessary, the floor could be hosed down.

Coal furnaces were the heating standard, and oil furnaces were coming into play, but Mr. Stickley patented his own passive heating system, the Craftsman Fireplace, which had a network of chambers within the fireplace walls to draw and heat fresh air and circulate it into the home.<sup>17</sup> Five Craftsman Fireplaces with massive metal hoods, made at his metal foundry, were installed in the Log House and one in the cow stable. While his heating system increased the heat output of the fireplaces, and the hoods acted as radiators, stoking five of them was undoubtedly labor intensive. Daughter Marion Stickley remembered, "In our home we had a man just to take care of the fireplaces."<sup>18</sup>

For the kitchen, Stickley's pet design concern for the housewife, electric refrigeration and gas stoves were available but were energy intensive and not entirely reliable. Iceboxes and coal or wood fired stoves were the prudent, if not up-to-the-minute choices. In the Log House kitchen, the large built-in icebox takes up most of one wall. Built partially into a hillside, the icebox benefitted from coolness of the earth, making more efficient use of ice, which was a winter-harvested commodity that was carefully insulated and stored until used.<sup>19</sup> Small green-stained icebox doors allowed access to staple items while a large 5" thick wood door opened to the walk-in icebox. Shoulder level doors on the outside of the kitchen allowed ice to be delivered without bringing it into the house. Inside, doors high on the icebox wall most likely allowed access to the ice troughs, making it unnecessary to go outdoors to check the level of the ice or clean the troughs.

The kitchen has thirteen inward-swinging casement windows, making it the brightest, most easily ventilated room in the house, after the front porch. Further ventilation was provided by the range hood above the massive eight burner Bramhall-Dean cast iron range.



The kitchen wing is topped with a cupola that functioned as a vent tower, offering a third method of ventilation. The kitchen had an added labor saving bonus, unusual for 1911: an electric dishwasher. This undoubtedly came in handy after the large parties the Stickley's were known to host.<sup>20</sup>

The cow stable, horse stable and the workers' cottage offer the largest outward display of laborsaving and occupant-welfare design at Craftsman Farms. Mr. Stickley said in *The Craftsman*, "We are constructing these and other buildings so that work will be simplified to the utmost degree. There is to be no lifting and drudgery in the stables..."<sup>21</sup>

The impact of electric light in the stables cannot be underestimated. The duties of feeding livestock, milking and mucking stalls necessarily began before sunup and often continued after sundown. Incandescent light almost eliminated the need to have live flame in buildings filled with valuable animals and highly flammable feed and bedding. Without depending on oil lanterns as sole light sources, farmhands could work with greater freedom and efficiency.

Like the icebox in the log house, this trio of buildings was set into a hillside, facing south, allowing the ground floor of each to remain cool in the summer, and benefitting from passive solar heat gain through broad windows in the winter.

A road and paths connected the south side of each building at ground level. Additionally, the three were connected on the north side by a climbing farm road that offered direct access to the second floor of the workers' cottage and horse stable as well as the interior silo and hayloft of the cow stable. For farmhands, this allowed the tremendous advantage of driving hay, feed, silage and supplies directly to the spaces where they would be stored, eliminating the need for hoists and winches. In the horse stable there is evidence that hay and feed were stored in a large room above the stalls and dropped into the stalls through trap doors in the floor.

In this pre-vaccine age horses were considered the most valuable farm animals because of the work they performed. They were housed separately from other animals to avoid transmission of communicable diseases. For their further well being, individual stalls were outfitted with windows offering each horse access to fresh air and light. Similar to the sanitary wall surfaces used in these kitchens and porches at the Farms, the concrete walls of the stalls were most likely painted with white enamel for easy cleaning. Through a connecting door, horses were bathed in the adjacent wet room, which was plumbed with running water and a floor drain.<sup>22</sup>

The cow stable, with fifteen tall windows across the front, allowed the Holstein herd fresh air and light year round. In the summer the windows were screened in an effort to minimize flies while allowing ample ventilation. As a precaution to bovine tuberculosis,

the herd received heated fresh air throughout the winter from a Craftsman Fireplace.<sup>23</sup> The building's interior silo may have provided some warmth as the plant material fermented within. The stable walls and the cows'-formed concrete feed troughs were also painted with white enamel for ease of cleaning. The cows were milked with an early electric milking system, allowing farm hands to attend to other chores while the machine was in use.<sup>24</sup>

Though the cows were milked electrically, the adjacent milk house relied on nature to rapidly cool the fresh milk, a necessity to prevent it from developing a gamey flavor. Tall metal milk cans were inserted into a spring-fed trough to ready the milk for bottling in



*In the horse stable, the four windows on the lower right opened from individual stalls inside, offering fresh air and light. The farm road on the backside is level with the second floor hayloft, eliminating the need for winches and pulleys.*

Craftsman Dairy glass bottles.<sup>25</sup> The milk was used at the Farms, sold locally and served to patrons at The Craftsman Restaurant on the twelfth floor of Stickley's Craftsman Building in Manhattan.<sup>26</sup>

Beyond the design plans published in *The Craftsman*, there are no known records of Mr. Stickley's design intentions at Craftsman Farms. The detailed conversations that passed between him and his architectural staff are anyone's guess. But little by little, the picture is coming back together. In 2008, the Craftsman Farms Foundation commissioned a historic site master plan, producing a detailed historic

structures report for every building at the Farms. The reports reference Stickley-era books on progressive farm design, published prior to the construction of Craftsman Farms. Many details in these books can be found in the Farms' buildings, showing that Stickley and his architectural staff were well aware of current thought in the field.

Setting aside the grand plans for the school, the orchards, the vineyard, the home sites and the factories, it is increasingly clear that the physical campus of Craftsman Farms wasn't painted with a broad brush. Intense thought and effort went into the last detail of every building, orchard and road. For those who listen, Mr. Stickley continues to teach.

### ***Exterior Material Palette Chart***

Mr. Stickley believed Craftsman homes should be built of materials chosen for their beauty, appropriateness to purpose and longevity, utilizing local materials whenever possible.<sup>27</sup> At Craftsman Farms, Stickley and his design team chose local and non-local materials in a limited palette that benefits the Farms by visually unifying twelve very different buildings.



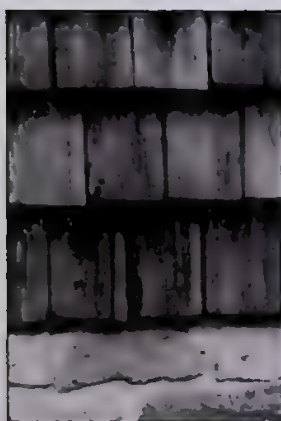
## *Exterior Materials*



**Fieldstone:** The Farms was built on land with vast amounts of stone brought by ice-age glacial movement.<sup>28</sup> Fieldstone was collected through the removal of unneeded dry stone walls, construction excavation and the cultivation of fields.<sup>29</sup> The collected stone was used to construct foundations, monumental chimneys and new stone walls in the landscape. Stones were used primarily in their natural form, though some were split as shaping and aesthetics dictated.

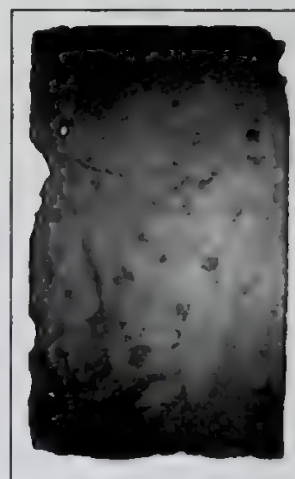


**American Chestnut:** Before 1904, when a fungal blight began to destroy the species, American Chestnut was one of the most plentiful woods in the eastern United States and was reasonably priced. It was prized for its strength, stability, bold grain figure and resistance to rot and insects.<sup>30</sup> Trees were felled on the property and used in peeled log form for the first floor walls, columns and beams of the Log House. Logs were also used selectively for columns, beams and lintels of most other Farms' structures. In all cases it was stained dark brown to resemble the color of its bark.



**Cypress Shingles:** Cypress is a member of the cedar family. Impregnated with a self-produced oil called cypressene,<sup>31</sup> it is highly resistant to rot and insects making it a prime shingle material. Rived, or split, shingles cost twice as much as sawn shingles but were chosen because "the rived shingle has exactly the surface of the growing tree from which the bark has been peeled"<sup>32</sup> and would weather more beautifully than the fuzzy surface of a sawn shingle. Rived cypress shingles cover exterior walls where logs or stone are not employed. The original shingles are still in place and have weathered to a color range of honey brown to almost black.

**Red Slate Roofs:** Because of its durability, slate is known as the '100 year roof'. Rough-split red slate roofs were installed on the twin cottages and were most likely used on all of the Farms buildings except the Log House. Red slate is not native to the area but shards can be found on the ground around every building. It was chosen to coordinate with the red barrel tile roof of the unrealized house Mr. Stickley intended to build for his family.<sup>33</sup> The original Farms' slate roofs were removed decades ago, but a grant has been secured to restore the twin cottage roofs.



**Painted Trim:** Window sashes, window frames and door frames were painted in a dull leaf green along with select doors. The diamond pane window sashes on the Log House were painted creamy off-white.



**Common Brick:** Used to a much lesser extent than other materials, smooth common brick was utilized for interior fireplaces and chimneys in the smaller structures and bordered the poured concrete porch floor of the log house. Several years after the twin cottages were completed, low, common brick walls and large three-over-four window panels were used to enclose the front porches.





## *Shared Details*



**Rectangular window panels:** The most common rectangular window configuration is 12 lites, three wide by four high. This was used for wood windows as well as the leaded pane windows of the twin cottages.



**Flared shingle hoods:** Shingled hoods above windows redirect rainwater away from windows. The same detail, when employed over foundations, directs water away from stonework and is called a flared water table.

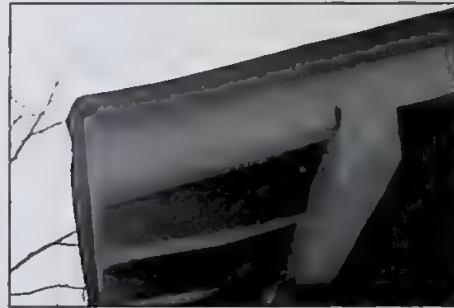


**Exposed structure:** Ridge beams (at roof peak) and horizontal supporting timbers, or top plates, extend beyond the walls to become cantilevered supports for exposed rafters. This is similar to the exposed joinery common in Stickley's early furniture.

**Logs used as columns, beams and lintels:** Log columns support all front porch roofs. Log columns are in the Log House living room and the ground floor of the horse stable. Log beams form the structure of the first floor ceiling in the Log House and the horse stable. Log lintels are found over the porch doors of the Log House, the front door of the workers' cottage and the light well windows on the first floor of the horse stable.



**Tapered rafter tails:** Most Farms' roofs are low pitched, with a minimum overhang of two feet. All have exposed, tapered rafter tails, which minimize the visual bulk of roof edges. The log house roof is a steeper pitch and has blunt-cut rafter tails.



**Hygienic painted surfaces:** Wherever concrete is used as a vertical interior surface, it was painted for easy cleaning. These surfaces are found in high-use areas like front porches, kitchens, and the interiors of the horse stable and cow stable, where the cows' molded concrete feed troughs and the walls were painted with white enamel.



*All images are by the author unless otherwise noted.*

(Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Ray Stubblebine, *Stickley's Craftsman Homes* (2006, Gibbs Smith), Chpt: Stickley's Three Homes, pp. 44-70.

<sup>2</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XVI, No. 2 (May 1909), Gustav Stickley, "Farm Life as the Basis of a Practical Education", pp. 243-245.

<sup>3</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XIX, No. 1 (October 1910), "A Country Home for the Business Man: A Second Visit To Craftsman Farms", pp. 58-62.

<sup>4</sup> David Cathers, *Gustav Stickley* (2003, Phaidon), 183.

<sup>5</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XV, No. 1 (October 1908), Gustav Stickley, "The Craftsman's House: A Practical



- Application of All the Theories of Home Building Advocated in This Magazine", 78-93.
- <sup>6</sup> "Ibid", p. 87.
- <sup>7</sup> "Ibid", p. 85.
- <sup>8</sup> "Ibid", pp. 88-92.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XV, No. 2 (November 1908), "Three of the Craftsman Farms Bungalows That May Prove Useful for Summer or Week-End Cottages", pp. 215-221.
- <sup>10</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XV, No. 3 (December 1908), "The Club House at Craftsman Farms: A Log House Planned Especially for the Entertainment of Guests", p. 341.
- <sup>11</sup> Cathers, p. 190.
- <sup>12</sup> Stubblebine, pp. 100-512.
- <sup>13</sup> *The Craftsman* (November 1908), pp. 216-219.
- <sup>14</sup> Virginia Dyer Vogt, Daniel B. Myers, *Images of America: Morris Plains* (2000, Arcadia Publishing), history timeline.
- <sup>15</sup> TVA: Electricity for All, [<http://newdeal.feri.org/tva/tva10.htm>], January 2011
- <sup>16</sup> W. Michael McCracken, Inventory of Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Workshops, [<http://www.cc.gatech.edu/~mike/gusiron.pdf>], January 2011.
- <sup>17</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XXI, No. 6 (March 1912), Gustav Stickley, "The Craftsman Fireplace: A Complete Heating and Ventilating System", pp. 688-691.
- <sup>18</sup> Cathers, p. 193.
- <sup>19</sup> Cecil Adams, "How was ice made and sold in pre-industrial times?" [<http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/2644/how-was-ice-made-and-sold-in-pre-industrial-times>], January 2011.
- <sup>20</sup> *Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Farms: A Pictorial History* (2009, The Craftsman Farms Foundation), David Cathers, Ed., 51.
- <sup>21</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XXI, No. 1 (October 1911), Gustav Stickley, "A Message From Craftsman Farms", p. 112.
- <sup>22</sup> Horse Barn, Craftsman Farms Historic Structures Report (2008, Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc.), Chpt. 2.2.
- <sup>23</sup> *The Craftsman* (October 1911), p. 113.
- <sup>24</sup> Milk House and Dairy Barn Remains, Craftsman Farms Historic Structures Report (2008, Jablonski Building Conservation, Inc.), Chpt. 2.2.
- <sup>25</sup> Cyril Farny Interview, Transcript, Gustav Stickley Oral History Interview, March 1, 1982, by Elaine Marramore Ellis, pg. M2A-10, Morristown and Morris Township Public Library
- <sup>26</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (July 1913), "The Craftsman Restaurant", p. 455.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Craftsman*, (October 1908), p. 80.
- <sup>28</sup> Mark Alan Hewitt, *Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Farms* (2001, Syracuse University Press), p. 101.
- <sup>29</sup> *The Craftsman*, Vol. XXI, No. 2 (November 1911), Natalie Curtis, "The New Log House at Craftsman Farms: An Architectural Development of the Log Cabin", p. 202.
- <sup>30</sup> The American Chestnut Foundation [<http://www.acf.org/history.php>], January 2011.
- <sup>31</sup> Southern Cypress Manufacturers Association [<http://www.cypressinfo.org/>], January 2011.
- <sup>32</sup> *The Craftsman* (November 1908), p. 217.
- <sup>33</sup> "Ibid", 218.

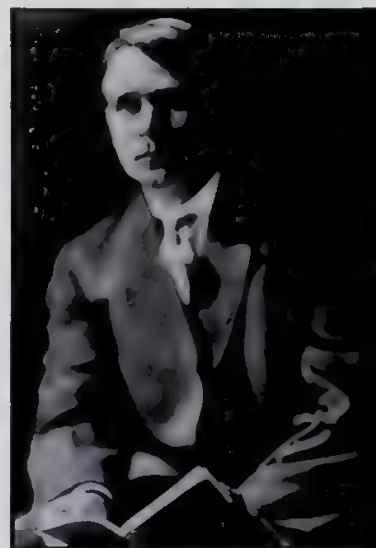
# A SCHOOL AT CRAFTSMAN FARMS

— A. Patricia Bartinique

*The only way to experience the real is to experience it.*

Raymond Riordon, *The Craftsman*, November 1912

The idea of a school for boys at Craftsman Farms is most famously recognized from Raymond Riordon's article in the November 1912 issue of *The Craftsman* magazine entitled "A Visit to Craftsman Farms: The Impression It Made and the Result: The Gustav Stickley School for Citizenship." Throughout its run *The Craftsman* published many articles on education, and Gustav Stickley repeatedly wrote about plans for a school at the Farms. In fact, when Stickley announced Craftsman Farms in the October 1908 issue of *The Craftsman*, "The Craftsman House: A Practical Application of All the Theories of Home Building Advocated in This Magazine," it only took till the second paragraph to find the following reference to the property that became Craftsman Farms: "where I am preparing to establish a school for the practical working out of the theory I have so long held of reviving practical and profitable handicrafts in connection with small farming carried on by modern methods of intensive agriculture."<sup>1</sup> The idea of a school was clearly present from the beginning of the plans for Craftsman Farms – an idea that would evolve and change but never come to fruition.



Raymond Riordon

As far back as the early issues of *The Craftsman*, comments and articles articulating the importance of educating both intellectually and manually abound. The two should be connected because one is diminished by the absence of the other. In January 1902 the magazine included an article by Irene Sargent entitled "Brain and Hand" calling for the joining of the intellectual and the manual and introducing the educational ideas of Prince Kropotkin.<sup>2</sup> Oscar Lovell Triggs' "The Workshop and School" appeared in the October 1902 issue which suggests the remedy for the "class system of modern society" is to make the school a workshop and the workshop a school.<sup>3</sup> This is only the first of several articles by Triggs in *The Craftsman*. And articles on education continue throughout the years. In a way these articles may be seen as the primer for the ideas Gustav Stickley would identify as he worked out his idea for the school at Craftsman Farms. They set the ground work and lead the way toward the ideas presented in Riordon's 1912 article.

Years before Gustav Stickley ever thought of Craftsman Farms, the ideas of progressive education, an education emphasizing real life experience, learning by doing, working in groups, problem solving, living based on one's decisions, were in the air. Spear-headed by the work of John Dewey, educated in philosophy and psychology, in his scholarly publications and at his Laboratory School, opened in 1896 at the recently established University of Chicago, the idea that an education needed to merge both book-learning and active learning for life in a democratic society began to emerge and gain the attention of educators. Two articles in *The Craftsman* bookend the ideas that would emerge in the School for Citizenship proposed for



Craftsman Farms. In March 1903, Rabbi Joseph H. Leiser's "The Influence of the Jews on Manual Training" discusses the need for an education of "mind, hand and heart; toward the democratization of industry, and the integralization of life" and sees Dewey as building on the work of Professor Gabriel Bamberger, the superintendent of the Jewish Manual Training School of Chicago, who espoused these ideas as the United States became an industrialized nation.<sup>4</sup> In March 1914, Arthur D. Dean's article "Child-Labor or Work for Children," while deploring the excesses of child labor in grueling factory jobs, applauds the fathers who send their children to school such as Interlaken, the progressive school in Indian where the boys lived and worked in nature as well as the classroom and worked manually as well as academically. Dean also endorses Dewey's view of "the importance for educational purposes 'of the close and intimate acquaintance with Nature at first hand'."<sup>5</sup>

Raymond Riordon, progressive educator, authored several articles in *The Craftsman* from 1912 through 1914 in addition to the article explaining the Craftsman Farms School for Citizenship. His first article in May 1912 says everything in the title: "Interlaken, an Outdoor School Where Boys through Their Own Efforts Learn How to Think and How to Work."<sup>6</sup> In October 1912 he writes of a neighborhood building and maintaining its own public school.<sup>7</sup> Following the November 1912 Craftsman Farms article Riordon continues to write about the need for vocational training in public schools,<sup>8</sup> and he authors "A New Idea in State Schools That Will Build Up Character and Body as Well as Brain: A Suggestion for California," again extolling the need to work with ones hands at a farm school.<sup>9</sup>

Gustav Stickley's interest in education is evident given the number of articles and comments throughout the issues of *The Craftsman*. From the October 1908 issue of *The Craftsman*, in which he introduced Craftsman Farms and the school, the references to the school, as well as the value of education that might be labeled "progressive" weave through the next years until the Riordon article in November 1912. In May 1909 in his Als Ik Kan column Stickley considers the plans for getting Craftsman Farms up and running, including "an ideal environment for a school"<sup>10</sup>

September 1910 sees the first in a series of four articles presented as talks with the Host of Craftsman Farms. Two of the articles focus on the education of the boy. The September article, "A Visit to Craftsman Farms: The Study of an Educational Ideal" begins with the Traveler, visiting in June, inquiring about the progress of the farm school that had been announced. The Host (Gustav Stickley) shows his visitor the new cottages, roads, plantings and indicates the start of the school the following spring (1911) with a few boys. The Host articulates that his whole life has been the search for "Truth" and the "Farm-School is a search for Truth." The idea of the school is to reverse the order of education that puts books first: "I believe that boys should first be taught the ideal and the practice of *doing something useful* with brains and hands, combined with abundant outdoor life. Through work the child should learn the necessity for knowledge. Study should be the valued supplement to work, and book-education should accompany, but never precede the education derived from actual individual experience." The age of these students is announced as between fourteen and twenty. Work, study, and play will happen year round. It is also interesting to note that the cottages are seen as places for the boys' parents to

visit during the summer. The Club House, of course, is the main meeting location. The reason for the school being a farm is "because the farm offers opportunities of almost endless variety for practical, creative and constructive development." The Visitor concludes that the idea "seems a product of the democracy of American life" and the way for the boy be formed in "the American character."<sup>11</sup>

The third article in the series, "The Value of a Country Education to Every Boy: A Talk with the Host of Craftsman Farms," returns in more general terms to the value of boy receiving an education in the country. The language is reminiscent of the first article, but there is not the specificity of the farm school. The country offers the boy a chance at "normal development," meaning the interaction of the hand and the head along with "the balance of the intellectual with the physical life."<sup>12</sup>

In the Als Ik Kan column in October 1912 Stickley introduces "A School for Citizenship" to open on 15 June 1913 and to be developed with Raymond Riordon's help. Stickley references Interlaken and the article Riordon wrote about that school for the May 1912 issue of *The Craftsman*. Also mentioned is the visit that Riordon paid to Craftsman Farms. Because of the May article and what Stickley saw as the similarities between Interlaken and the plans for his school at Craftsman Farms, he tells of the correspondence and friendship that has developed between himself and Riordon. Riordon will be active in working out details of the New Jersey school, and some of the students trained at Interlaken will be planning for the fifty boys, now to be between the ages of nine and fourteen who are "less fortunate" who will begin the school at the Farms. The column contains much detail as to the access the boys will have to everything already existent at Craftsman Farms: all the buildings, including the log house in which the Stickley family resides, learning to care for the animals, the orchards, as well as working on buildings and roads under construction, landscaping, the newest advances in agriculture, and "the Three Rs."<sup>13</sup>

In November 1912 Riordon's article appears: "A Visit to Craftsman Farms: The Impression It Made and the Result: The Gustav Stickley School for Citizenship."<sup>14</sup> Here Gustav Stickley articulates his vision:

This is my Garden of Eden. This is the realization of the dreams that I had when I worked as a lad. It is because my own dreams have come true that I want other boys to dream out their own good future here for themselves.<sup>15</sup>

Riordon then details the theory behind and the plans for the school. "Education should train for usefulness. . . . If the public schools were built and maintained by the users, usefulness would become the common possession of the race. If our training of the young were not a mere superficial outline of a stereotyped form of academic teaching, if it were a vital training of the boy and girl for life, usefulness would be inbred in our future citizens."

"Mr. Stickley has decided to use the large estate and its buildings for the development of this school which will become a community." The plan will permit the students who graduate to go on to live productive lives as executives, farmers, businessmen. During the time at the Farms,



the boys will build their houses. "Each house will conduct its own domestic affairs under the leadership of a woman." Lessons will be learned wherever things need to be done. Whatever is produced will be sold in local markets and earn income.

The article ends calling for adaptability in education. Riordon reminds the reader of "the men who built this country": workers, farmers, wood cutters, men who "knew Nature" which is what made them honest. And then he asks the question: "Don't you think it will be worthwhile to have a school for citizenship where honest boys will be nurtured into honest men?"<sup>16</sup>

A clarion announcement. Great ideas and ideals. But no more happened. Other articles appear about Craftsman Farms, the Craftsman Movement, and those announcing the new Craftsman Building in New York City. Articles about education appear, but there was no more mention of the school at the Farms. Gustav Stickley's dream of the School for Citizenship was not to be.

(Endnotes)

- <sup>1</sup> Gustav Stickley, "The Craftsman House: A Practical Application of All the Theories of Home Building Advocated in This Magazine," *The Craftsman* 15 (October 1908), p. 79.
- <sup>2</sup> Irene Sargent, "Brain and Hand," *The Craftsman* 1 (January 1902), pp. 41-44.
- <sup>3</sup> Oscar Lovell Triggs, "The Workshop and School," *The Craftsman* 3 (October 1902), p. 21.
- <sup>4</sup> Joseph H. Leiser, "The Influence of the Jews on Manual Training," *The Craftsman* 3 (March 1903), pp. 380-389.
- <sup>5</sup> Arthur D. Dean, "Child-labor or Work for Children," *The Craftsman* 25 (March 1914), p. 519.
- <sup>6</sup> Riordon, "Interlaken, an Outdoor School Where Boys Through Their Own Efforts Learn How to Think and How to Work," *The Craftsman* 22 (May, 1912), pp. 178-187.
- <sup>7</sup> Riordon, "How a Neighborhood Built Its Own Public School and Is Making It Self-maintaining," *The Craftsman* 23 (October 1912), pp. 70-75.
- <sup>8</sup> Riordon, "Does Vocational Training Fail to Build Character, or Create a Conscious Citizenship? A Study in Education," *The Craftsman* 23 (January 1913), pp. 450-454.
- <sup>9</sup> Riordon, "A New Idea in State Schools that Will Build up Character and Body as Well as Brain: a Suggestion for California," *The Craftsman* 24 (April 1913), pp. 59-64.
- <sup>10</sup> Stickley, "Als Ik Kan: Farm Life as the Basis of Practical Education," *The Craftsman* 16 (May, 1909), p. 243.
- <sup>11</sup> "A Visit to Craftsman Farms: the Study of an Educational Ideal," *The Craftsman* 18 (September 1910), pp. 639-647.
- <sup>12</sup> "The Value of a Country Education to Every Boy: a Talk with the Host of Craftsman Farms," *The Craftsman* 19 (January 1911), pp. 389-394.
- <sup>13</sup> Stickley, "Als Ik Kan: A School for Citizenship," *The Craftsman* 23 (October 1912), p. 121.
- <sup>14</sup> Raymond Riordon, "A Visit to Craftsman Farms: The Impression it Made and the Result: The Gustav Stickley School for Citizenship," *The Craftsman* 23 (November 1912), pp. 152-165.
- <sup>15</sup> Stickley, as cited in Riordon (November 1912), p. 152.
- <sup>16</sup> Riordon (November 1912), p. 163.
- <sup>17</sup> Riordon (November 1912), p. 164.

*Mr. Stickley's Home: 1911*

## EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

**Electric Lantern #203**

c: 1911

Hammered copper with amber hammered glass

10 5/8" x 10 5/8" x 14 3/4"

18" iron extension arm with two 24" iron support chains 6" x 6" hammered copper wall escutcheon struck with *Als Ik Kan* within joiner's compass shop mark

This is one of two such lanterns used on the exterior of the Log House. One was located over each of the large Dutch doors on the front porch.

**Electric Lantern #671**

c: 1911

Wrought iron with frosted replacement glass

5 3/4" x 5 3/4" x 10 1/2" on 17" wrought iron chain with a 6"

diameter wrought iron canopy struck with *Als Ik Kan* within joiner's compass shop mark

This lantern is original to the northeast bedroom of the Log House, which is believed to have been Gustav Stickley Jr's bedroom.

**Grueby Leaf-Form Vase**

c: 1910

Dark green glaze

8" x 15 1/8" x 5 1/2" dia. foot and 4 3/4" dia. mouth

Marked on underside: "220" and "GRUEBY POTTERY BOSTON USA" in a circle

Passed down through the family, this vase is believed to be the base of a Stickley oil lamp that appeared in photos of the Log House in the November 1911 issue of *The Craftsman*. Gift of Barbara Fuldner.

**Craftsman Farms Milk Bottles**

c: 1912

One quart and one pint

Clear glass molded with the words "CRAFTSMAN DAIRY FARM, MORRIS PLAINS, N.J., GRADE A MILK"

Mr. Stickley's prize Holstein herd produced milk that was used by his family, sold locally and served at his Craftsman Restaurant in the Craftsman Building in Manhattan. Gift of Martin Rapp in Memory of Maggie Rapp.

**Green Glazed Terra Cotta Roof Tile**

Dated: 4-5-13 [April 5, 1913]

8 1/2" x 10 1/2", Weight 4.5 lbs.

Marked on reverse: "LUDOWICI CELADON CO, CHICAGO"

These interlocking roof tiles were installed on the roof of the Log House in 1913, two years after the Stickley family took occupancy. The first roof was a rolled building felt called Ruberoid.

**Green Glazed Terra Cotta Ridge Cap Tile**

c: 1913

Marked on reverse: 8189-6

13" x 12 1/2" x 4 1/2"

This tile protected the roof ridge and would have been amongst the last tiles to be installed on the Log House.

**Green Glazed Terra Cotta End Cap Tile**

c: 1913

Marked on reverse: LUDOWICI CELADON CO, CHICAGO"

10 3/4" x 3 1/2" x 1 5/8"

End cap tiles interlock with the flat roof tiles to give the end of the tile row a substantial, finished appearance.

**Red Slate Roof Tile**

c: 1909

8 1/4" x 15"

With the exception of the Log House, all of the buildings at Craftsman Farms may have had red slate roofs. The original roofs were removed decades ago. This tile was found in the ruins of the cow stable.

**Craftsman Gingko Table Scarf**

c: 1911

19" x 122"

Linen floss and linen appliqué ginkgo leaves on linen ground with 2" hemstitch border on sides and 2 1/4" hemstitch ends. This extraordinarily large example of a Craftsman table scarf belonged to the Stickley family and is believed to be the scarf shown on the dining room sideboard in the November 1911 issue of *The Craftsman*. Gift of Susan and David Cathers.

**Table Scarf by Ada F. Ellwood**

c: 1903

15" x 88"

Believed to have been purchased by Mr. Stickley when visiting London in early 1903, this table scarf would have been among the family's personal belongings when they moved to Craftsman Farms in 1910.

**Lace Shawl**

c: 1915

Originally belonging to Gustav Stickley's wife Eda this lovely lace scarf has been passed down through the family. On generous loan from Nancy Calderwood.

**Ruberoid Sample and Red Ruberoid Cement Can**

c: 1911

The original roof of the Log House was Ruberoid, a rolled building felt that was available in several colors. When Mr. Stickley installed terra cotta roof tiles in 1913, the Ruberoid was utilized as an underlayment.

**Rookwood Pottery Shard**

c: 1916

Marked on underside: "XVI, 2260D, P"

This shard was unearthed during the restoration of the Log House.

**Craftsman Interior Door Handle with Thumb Latch & Deadbolt**

c: 1909

No shop mark

4" x 15 1/4" x 2 1/2"

Serpentine wrought iron grip riveted to wrought iron back plate, cast iron thumb latch and wrought iron deadbolt knob. This door handle is believed to have been installed on the interior of one of the exterior doors of the cottages.

*All items are from the collection of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms unless otherwise noted.*



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University of Wisconsin, Digital Library for the Decorative Arts and Material Culture:  
<http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/DLDecArts/Search.html>



### For Further Reading:

Readers may wish to see earlier exhibition catalogues in the "Mr. Stickley" series, produced by The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms in conjunction with case exhibitions at The Annual Grove Park Inn Arts & Crafts Conference:

2008 *Mr. Stickley's Catalogues*  
2009 *Mr. Stickley's Restaurant*  
2010 *Mr. Stickley's Needle-Work*

The "Mr. Stickley" publications are available at the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms booth at the Grove Park Conference. In addition they are available the Museum's shop and can be ordered by phone at 973.540.0311 or through the Museum's website: [stickleymuseum.org](http://stickleymuseum.org).

For Further Reading on Gustav Stickley  
and the Arts & Crafts Movement visit our online bibliography.  
<http://stickleymuseum.org/arts-a-crafts-movement/further-reading.html>



# About the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms

## Visiting Craftsman Farms

Craftsman Farms is located at  
2352 Route 10 West  
Morris Plains, New Jersey 07950

The entrance is located on Route 10  
West at Manor Lane, about 3 miles  
west of I-287 in Parsippany-Troy Hills,  
New Jersey.

Driving directions are available at  
[stickleymuseum.org](http://stickleymuseum.org).

Free to members and children under 6  
Adults: \$7; Seniors & Students \$5  
Closed on Major Holidays.

**Museum Tour Schedule:**  
Year Round on Weekends  
Hourly from 11:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Additional Tours April 1 — November 16:  
Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.  
12:15 p.m. and 1:45 p.m.

**Group Tours** are available by reservation.  
Call 973.540.0311

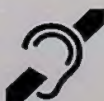
**Museum Shop Hours:**  
Sat. & Sun.— 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Additional Hours April 1 — November 16:  
Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.  
Noon to 3:00 p.m.

**Contact Us:**  
Offices: 973.540.0311  
Museum Shop: 973.540.1165  
Email: [info@stickleymuseum.org](mailto:info@stickleymuseum.org)  
website: [stickleymuseum.org](http://stickleymuseum.org)



The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms  
is committed to assuring that all individuals  
can participate in our programs.

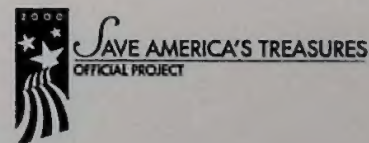


If you require the use of assistive listening  
devices or other special assistance please call  
at least two weeks in advance.

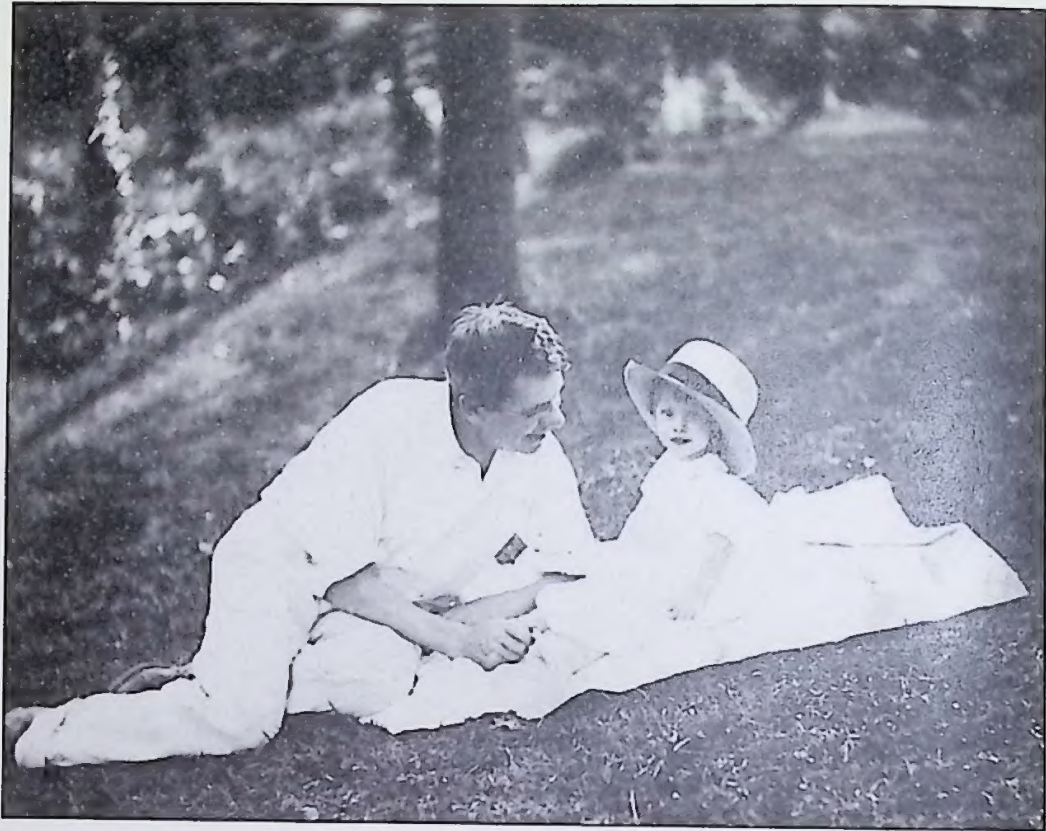
Craftsman Farms, the former home of noted  
designer Gustav Stickley, is owned by the  
Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills and is  
operated as The Stickley Museum at Craftsman  
Farms by The Craftsman Farms Foundation,  
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New Jersey. Restoration of the National Historic  
Landmark, Craftsman Farms, is made possible,  
in part, by a Save America's Treasures Grant  
administered by the National Parks Service,  
Department of the Interior, and by support  
from Morris County Preservation Trust, The  
New Jersey Historic Trust, and individual  
members. The Craftsman Farms Foundation  
received an operating grant from the New  
Jersey Historical Commission. The Craftsman  
Farms Foundation gratefully acknowledges a  
grant from the New Jersey Cultural Trust.



**Morris County  
Preservation Trust**







Mr. Stickley's Home

\$7.00



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